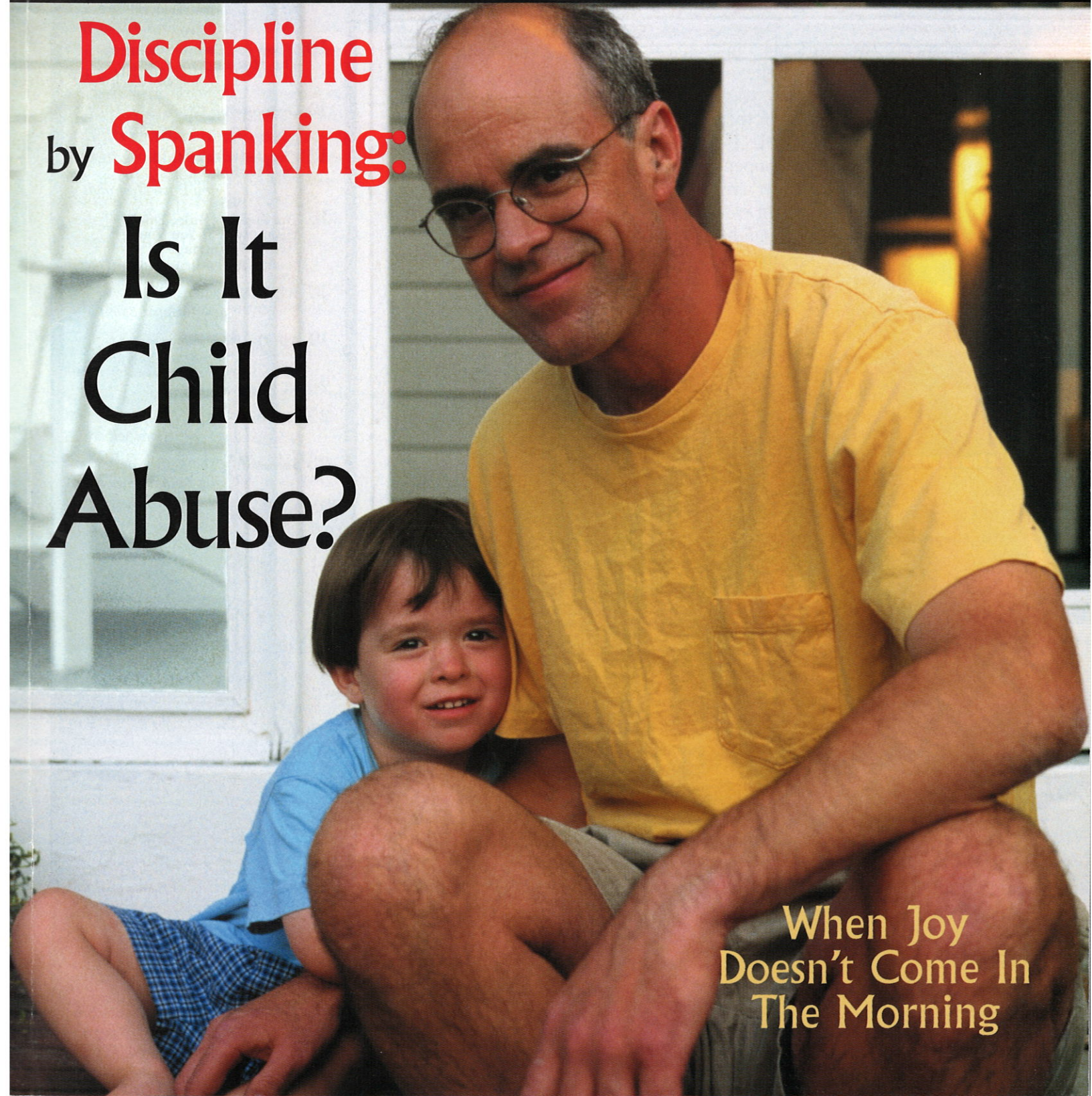


PSYCHOLOGY FOR
LIVING
WINTER 2002

Why
God
Waits

Discipline
by **Spanking:**
Is It
Child
Abuse?



When Joy
Doesn't Come In
The Morning

This World Is Not Our Home

by Bruce Narramore

On October 22, 1939, C.S. Lewis preached a sermon to students in Oxford, England. I believe Lewis' words to a nation at war still speak eloquently to us in the United States today. He said, "If we had foolish unchristian hopes about human culture, they are now shattered. If we thought we were building up a heaven on earth, if we looked for something that would turn the present world from a place of pilgrimage into a permanent city satisfying the soul of man, we are disillusioned, and not a moment too soon."



Dr. Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

Whatever else the events of September 11 have done to our country's collective psyche, they have served as a radical reminder that this world is not our home. We will never find security, peace, and fulfillment in life if we rest our hopes on humanity's efforts to build a better world apart from God. We are, as the song puts it, "Just a passing through. Our treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the

blue." The only place to find an unchanging, absolute source of security is in our relationship with God. Even there, we will have suffering and tribulations since God has not promised to isolate us from pain and problems. But He has promised to go through the suffering with us — even through the valley of the shadow of death. And He has promised us eternity with Him.

Several articles in this issue of *LIVING* help us develop a Christian perspective on suffering in the daily details of life. Dick Innes shares insights on "Overcoming Grief." Carol Lacy offers sound advice in "When Joy Doesn't Come in the Morning." And in his helpful article "Why God Waits," Richard Bauman discusses those times when God seems far away.

Helping people know God in the middle of their sufferings and struggles is one of the major ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation. In "NCF in Action" you will find some of the exciting ways that our ministry is touching the lives of many around the world.

My prayer for you this year is that you will have a renewed sense of the fragility of life on this earth and that you will rededicate yourself to serving others as you travel on your journey to our ultimate home with our Father in the Celestial City.

WINTER 2002

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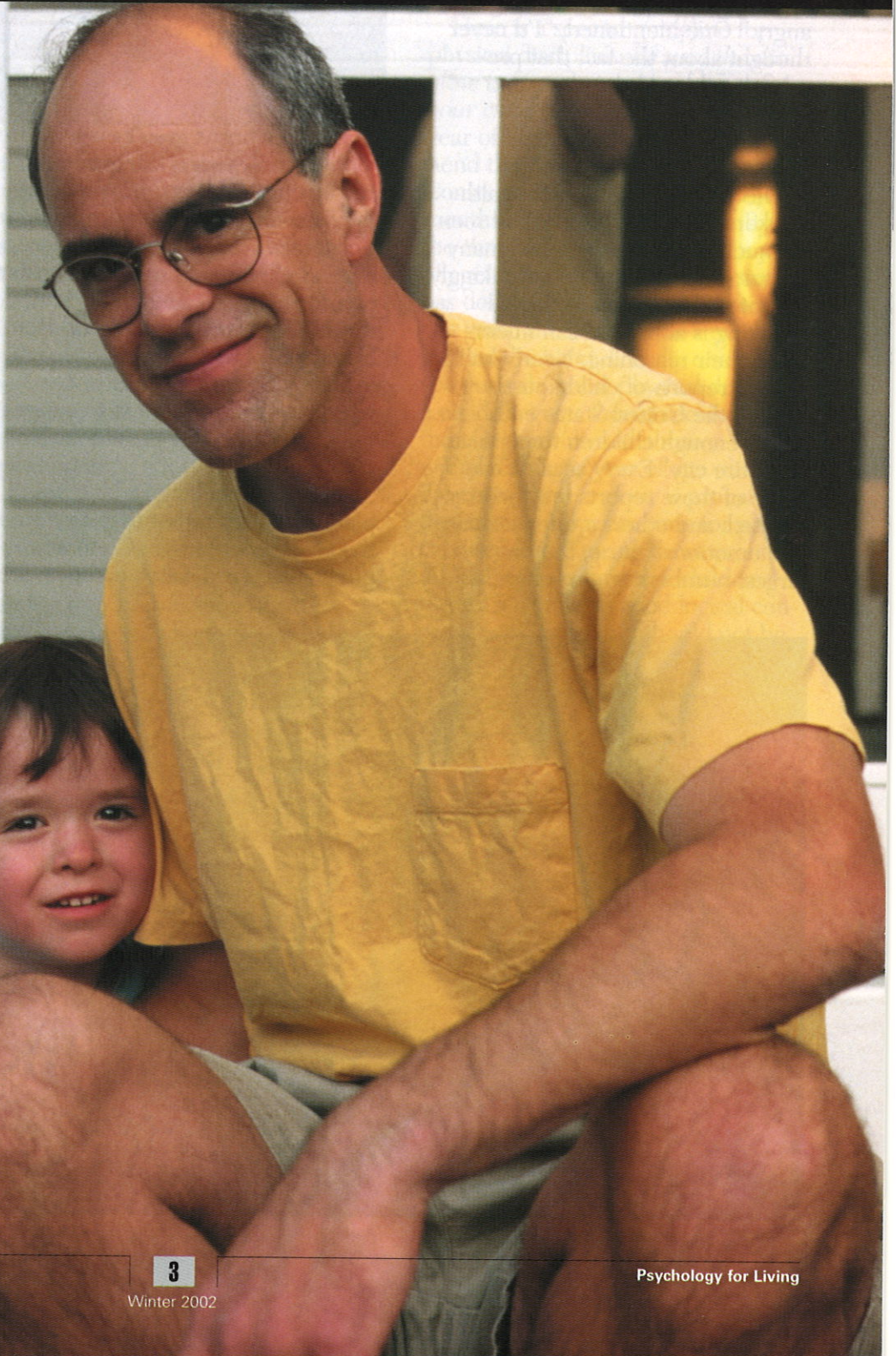


Discipline by Spanking: Is It Child Abuse?

by Bruce Narramore

Several years ago I debated the president of the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse. We staked out our positions in front of about two thousand social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other professional and lay workers. She argued that many parents severely abuse children through spanking, that spanking doesn't work, and that it gives children negative models of how to solve problems with violence.

I agreed that many parents abuse children under the guise of spanking, but I also argued that physical correction doesn't have to be abusive. I reminded my colleague that children can be equally abused emotionally through verbal blows like "stupid," "clumsy," and "idiot." Then I pointed out that there is a difference between firmly but calmly giving a child a swat and hitting a child in anger. And I added that young children don't have the abstract reasoning ability to understand more sophisticated verbal forms of discipline. Young children think concretely. Sometimes they understand a simple no and a spank on the hand or the bottom much better than a lengthy dialogue on the inappropriateness of their actions. You can't sit down and tell a fourteen-month-old, ▶



“Sweetheart, let’s discuss the philosophical and psychological implications of throwing your toys at your sister.”

When we finished our debate and turned off the microphone, my opponent turned to me and said, “I hadn’t thought of it that way. You almost convinced me.” Other conferees commented, “I’ve never thought about the possibility of spanking a child without being angry.” One mentioned, “I’d never thought about the fact that preschool children have almost no abstract reasoning ability.”

Is Spanking Child Abuse?

The professional mental-health workers mentioned above had seen so much abuse and heard so many horror stories that they unthinkingly accepted the argument that all spanking is abusive. I can understand their reasoning. Nearly half a million reports of child abuse are filed in the United States each year. That’s enough children to populate an entire city! Every year! While some of those reports may be exaggerated, and others are for sexual and emotional abuse, the single largest numbers are for physical

abuse. And many of those happen under the guise of physical punishment.

Some years ago I read an article quoting an American evangelist who teaches parents to “break their will,” blister their bottoms red,” and to spank week-old babies. He tells listeners that girls might not need spanking until three weeks of age but boys will need to be punished physically from the time they are a few days old! Think of it: a minister of God recommending spanking a newborn infant! This is not only cruel and abusive; it’s nonsense. Newborns aren’t even aware that there is such a thing as right and wrong. All they know when they are hit is that they are living in a cruel world filled with pain instead of love and safety. Christian parents need to completely reject this abusive treatment of children. Never mind that misguided teachers use a Scripture verse or two wrenched out of context to support their position. This position is simply not biblical.

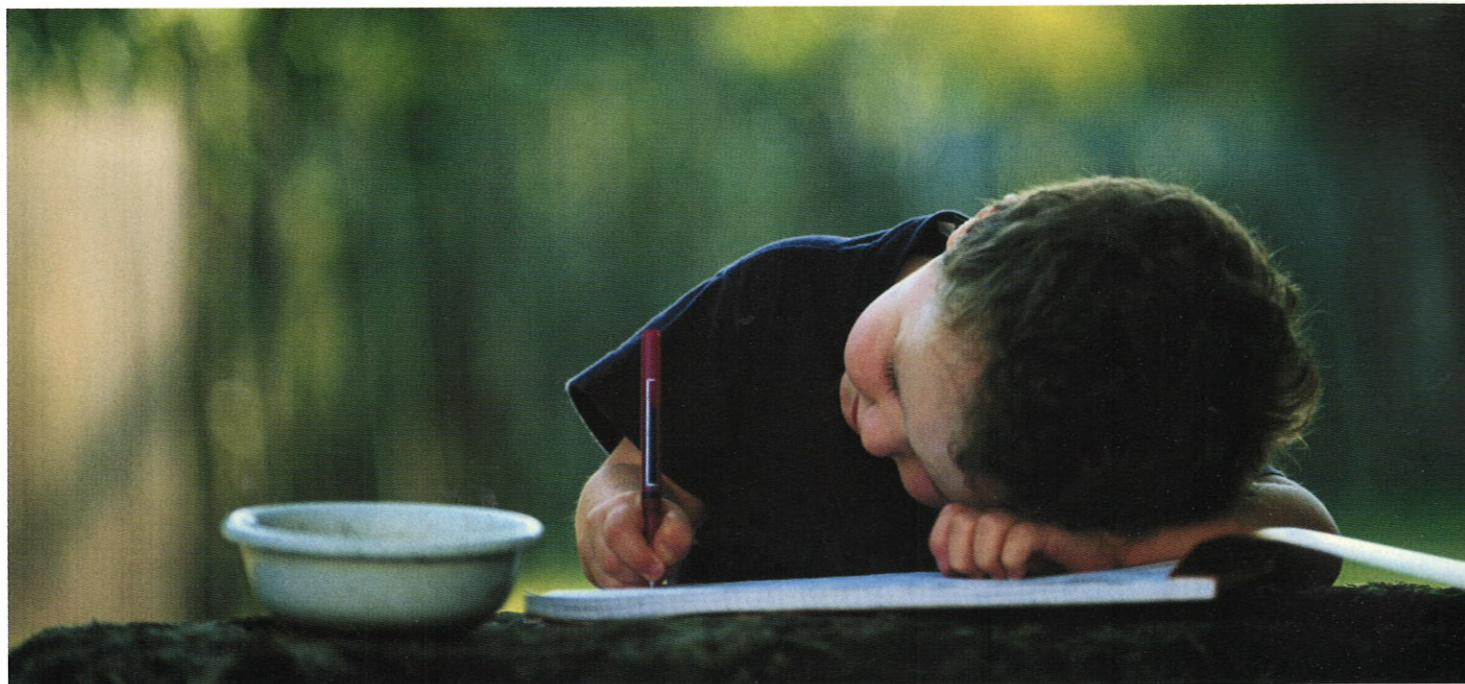
Any time spanking is done out of parental anger, rather than love for the child, it is abusive. Go to any public place and watch parents with

their children, and you will probably see one or more parents angrily grab their children or impulsively hit them. Other parents strike their children angrily or shake them when they can’t get them to obey. Ten percent of child abuse cases come from severe shakes that have caused spinal cord and brain injuries. All angry corporal punishment frightens sensitive children and undermines their sense of safety, belonging, and security. In strong-willed or more rebellious children, it creates anger and the desire for revenge.

Should We Spare The Rod?

By discouraging all spanking, social activists and health professionals hope to eliminate or drastically reduce cases of abuse. They also warn that since children learn by watching their parents, children who are spanked may learn to use physical violence to solve their own problems. It is a fact that children who are abused have a much greater likelihood of growing up to abuse their own children.

The potential to abuse children should make all parents think seriously about the wisdom of spanking. Christian parents, especially, should



be sensitive to the need to lovingly and patiently nurture children the way God, our heavenly Father, nurtures us. But does this mean we should never spank our children? Not at all. The fact that some parents abuse children with words doesn't mean we should never talk to our children, and the fact that some parents abuse children through spanking doesn't mean parents should never spank their children.

The Bible supports the occasional, restrained use of physical discipline. Proverbs 13:24 tells us, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." This verse makes it clear there is a place for spanking, but it also tells us something about how to go about it. Like all good discipline, spankings should flow from love and be done for our children's welfare.

When our daughter was about a year old, she started throwing her silverware on the floor. We would have liked to reason with Debbie, but she was too young to understand. If we used a logical consequence and took her food away, she wouldn't have seen the connection between throwing spoons and losing her food. She would have thought we were starving her for no reason. Since no other discipline would work, the next time Debbie threw a spoon on the floor we simply told her "No-no" and gave her a firm but non-angry spank on her hands. Within a week she went from throwing an average of five spoons on the floor each day to one. A couple of days later, she stopped entirely. We didn't damage Debbie or abuse her. We simply taught her to control her behavior by using the only discipline that would work. Like Debbie, most young children can profit from a little physical discipline if it's done correctly.

The Bible mentions several types of discipline – instruction by words (Deuteronomy 4:36), instruction from the heart (Psalm 16:7), instruc-



tion through the consequences of our actions (Luke 15:11-32), and spanking (Proverbs 22:15). Spanking is only one method of discipline, and it should by no means be our major method of child training. Spankings are helpful only when they are used appropriately and in a good balance with other forms of discipline. Here are some specific guidelines to help you decide when a spanking is appropriate.

First, *do not spank a child when you are angry*. Angry spankings are as unbiblical as failing to discipline. In fact, angry spankings aren't discipline – they're punishment. And they are abusive. By your example, they teach children that the only way to get someone else to control their behavior is to lose control of yours. God does not correct his children in anger, and we shouldn't either. Striking children in anger humiliates them, frightens them, and makes them angry or depressed. The Bible tells us "there is no fear in love" (I John 4:18), and that we shouldn't provoke our children to anger because that discourages them (Colossians 3:21). Just imagine how you would feel if someone two or three times your size got furious and hit you! That's how children feel when they are spanked by an angry, out-of-control parent.

I realize it is easier to say we shouldn't spank in anger than it is to actually avoid it. Most of us

occasionally lose our tempers or have times when we feel angry and almost strike a child. If you have felt this way, you know the line between maintaining control and losing it can be a thin one. But hitting in anger is not the answer. There are occasions for spanking children, but we should always spank out of a motive of love and a concern for our children's welfare, not because we feel angry and at the end of our rope.

Here is a second guideline for physical discipline: *Be sure the discipline is appropriate to the age of your child*. During most of the first year of life children cannot comprehend the meaning of a spanking. Consequently, during those early months, it is abusive to spank. By the time children reach about a year of age their central nervous system has developed to the point that they can grasp the meaning of a no and a slap on the hand. Usually one or two spanks is the most physical discipline a child that age should receive. Any more is punitive and abusive.

From about a year of age until they turn three or four is probably the most appropriate time for physical discipline. During those years it's difficult to reason with a child and there aren't always good logical consequences. Spanking should not be your primary discipline during this period, but it does have an occasional place. Probably the best way to handle most of your toddler's misbehaviors is to distract him, kiddie-proof your home, remove him from the scene of the crime, or get him involved in interesting activities. If you are spanking frequently, that probably means you haven't found more effective forms of discipline or some good preventive actions.

By the time children reach school age they respond better to reasoning and appropriate logical consequences than they do to spanking. They learn their lessons much better if they suffer logical consequences like missing a meal, forfeiting their favorite television program, or

Child Abuse, continued on page 7 ►

When Divorce Comes to Your Adult Child



by Dawn Hamilton

We met our son at the airport. Paul stepped from the plane with all he had left in the world – his old toolbox. He walked slowly with none of his old carefree spirit. My husband and I said little to him as we found the car and headed home. We closed the garage door, and Paul's older brother came running from the house. He hugged his brother and did not have to speak.

I remembered being so sure that because of our Christian home, our boys would marry and have happy homes. I never dreamed divorce would enter the picture.

At eighteen years of age, Paul fell

in love with Stacy. She reminded me of a Dresden doll with her pale skin and stunning black hair. However, our son told us about her family. Stacy's mother had lived with many different men and was abused by several of them. She came from an emotionally deprived and chaotic home with no apparent Christian values.

We shared our concerns with Paul but the attraction grew quickly between the two. One day our son informed us that Stacy, her mother, sisters, and the man of the moment were moving to another state. Paul was invited to go along.

"Please don't leave," we begged. "If your feelings are still the same in a few months, we will buy you a

ticket to visit Stacy."

Paul considered our suggestion, but several weeks later he announced, "I'm going."

We continued to pray, but God did not intervene.

The evening Paul left home, his few things were loaded into an old station wagon belonging to the family. I could not believe he had really gone.

Several months later, I was entertaining a houseguest when the mail arrived with a letter from Paul. "I knew it was wrong to live with Stacy, so we are married." His words stung and I didn't want to share this news with my friend. Trying to smile and make small talk was almost impossible. I couldn't

concentrate on her words and felt she knew there was something wrong. The words, "He married her," kept coming. I could hardly wait to leave the room for the kitchen to prepare supper and wait for my husband.

In our bedroom, as soon as we could be together, I showed him Paul's letter and retreated to the comfort of his arms. Learning Paul had been married in a veteran's hall by a justice of the peace didn't help either.

After a long night of hardly sleeping, I dressed and left a note for my guest. "I will be home as soon as possible," I wrote with instructions for her breakfast.

Driving to the home of a dear friend, I knew I could pour out my heart as I sat at her kitchen table. Nina prayed for me. I could not even do that. Her love helped me to know I was not alone.

One year later the marriage was over. Paul phoned as my husband and I were settling down for the night.

"Can I come home?" he asked. Without hesitation, our son continued, "Will you have room for me?" Our son had left before his father and I had been transferred to a new location. Paul had not seen our new home.

We replied, "If we don't, we'll build one."

Paul has never forgotten those words. Later, he said, "If you hadn't taken me back, I'd have gone right down the drain."

For the next few weeks Paul ate his meals and often lost them. "If she comes back, please don't be angry with her," he said. He was still trying to make what was

wrong into right. We often wondered what we could have done differently to have stopped this from happening.

We learned many lessons which only hurt and struggle can teach. One was the answer to a question I often asked myself, *What will our friends think? Will anyone want me as a leader when my son has been divorced?* Several of our friends seemed to have such perfect children. The other question was, *What can we do to help our son now?*

We knew the love and grace of God was carrying us along, as well as Paul. Preaching "I-told-you-so's," or reminding him of how much we hurt, had no place in our home. But what about others? Fortunately our pastor was most understanding, and as I asked questions, he reminded me to simply love Paul. We did, and Paul has now been remarried over 19 years and has three children of his own.

Today when divorce is mentioned in a conversation, I still do not always share my story. I'm unsure about the reaction of some, though I have been able to help others who are walking the same road. People show in body language how they feel. Just a superior look, giving no encouragement or comment, and passing quickly by can say a lot.

Paul still reminds us of that late night phone call when we told him we would build something for him if we didn't have room. We tell him, "That was in the past. We're just grateful that God has brought us all through."

When I meet people who have had divorce in their family, I am never shocked, but I can feel their hurt with them. I have learned to listen a lot, and occasionally I share our story. But most of all, I want others to know God's grace and to simply love their children.

Names have been changed.



losing play time with a friend.

Logical consequences and reasoning are also the best forms of discipline for teens. Spanking them is a sure sign that you have lost control and that your relationship is crumbling. There are always better ways of disciplining teenagers than to humiliate and infuriate them by spanking.

This leads to a third guideline: *Don't utilize physical spankings when there is another equally or more effective means of discipline.* I recommend this because spankings can be so easily abused.

Parents generally hit their children because they feel frustrated and don't know what else to do. Don't fall into this trap. Find other loving, sensitive, and successful ways of dealing with behavior problems.

Finally, *remember that spankings don't solve the underlying problem.* If your children are misbehaving because they feel unloved, incompetent, worthless, or bored, a spanking may temporarily stop the symptom, but it won't solve the real problem — one or more of their basic unmet emotional needs. Effective discipline must include ways of addressing these inner needs and the sources of their problems before they turn into misbehaviors.

That is why some parents have reared healthy, disciplined children with minimal or no spanking at all. They were sensitive to their children's needs, helped them feel loved, confident, and valuable, and corrected them with appropriate loving consequences instead of spanking. I am not recommending you never spank, but I strongly urge you not to spank in anger and to always ask yourself if there is a more effective way.

Since spankings don't help meet your children's hidden emotional needs, their effectiveness is limited to temporarily controlling behavior, not helping children feel understood or enabling them to grow emotionally.

Adapted from *Help! I'm a Parent* by Bruce Narramore, Ph.D., Zondervan, 1972.



Finding Your Life Partner: Make Your List Before You Go "Shopping"

By Neil Clark Warren, Ph.D.

Suppose you could choose ten qualities that your future spouse will have. Which would you choose? But wait—let's sweeten the deal. Not only do you get to select ten positive qualities this person will have, but you can also identify and eliminate ten deficits. Which twenty items would make your list?



Neil Clark Warren, Ph.D.

I asked for a volunteer and an energetic young woman named Jessie came bounding up to the podium.

"Okay, Jessie," I said. "I'm going to put you on the hot seat. I want you to tell everybody here what you're looking for in a partner."

"Oh, that's no problem," she responded, clearly enjoying being my guinea pig. "I can tell you exactly what I want in a man, because I've given it a lot of thought. I want someone who's good-looking, hard-working, fun-loving—oh yeah, and mentally stable."

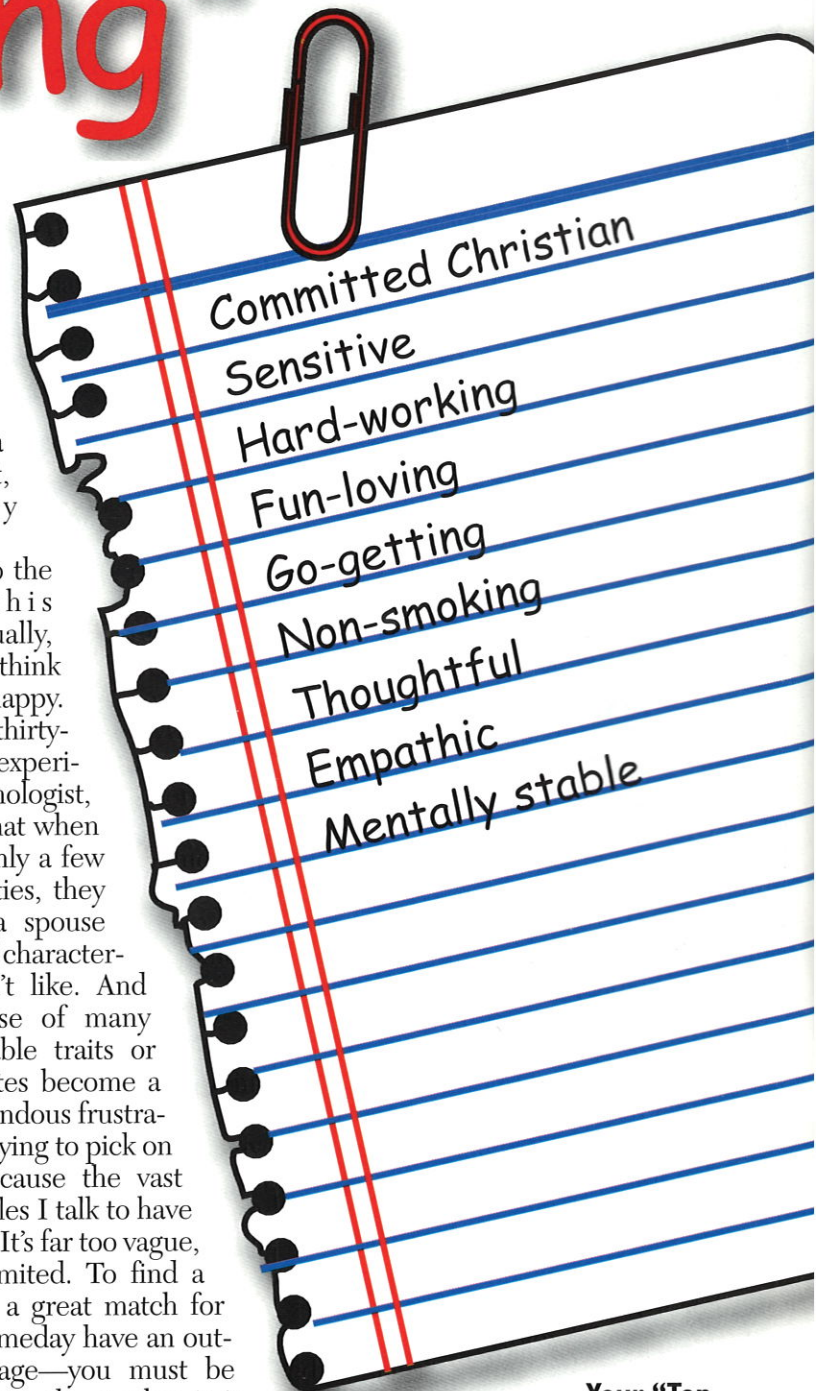
The audience laughed, and I said, "That's a good start. What else?"

She thought for several moments, then said, "Well, uh, I guess he'd need to have good manners, too. And I want a man who's thoughtful—someone who will bring me flowers and

chocolate."

I asked if she wanted to add anything else to her list, and she said, "Nope. That's it. If I could marry a man like that, I'd be very happy!"

Then I got to the point of this exercise: "Actually, Jessie, I don't think you'd be very happy. Based on my thirty-five years of experience as a psychologist, I can tell you that when people name only a few indistinct qualities, they end up with a spouse who has a lot of characteristics they don't like. And over the course of many years, undesirable traits or missing attributes become a source of tremendous frustrations. I'm not trying to pick on you, Jessie, because the vast majority of singles I talk to have a list like yours. It's far too vague, general, and limited. To find a partner who is a great match for you—and to someday have an outstanding marriage—you must be extremely precise about what it is you want and don't want in a partner."



Your "Top Ten" Lists

All of this is why I stress to singles

the vital importance of compiling lists of top ten positive qualities and top ten negative qualities—or what I call “must-have” and “can’t-stand” lists. Becoming crystal clear about these characteristics will prepare you to be a highly efficient “mate shopper,” a person who will know with confidence and clarity whether a potential partner is worth pursuing. If you think a shopping list sounds a bit crass or unspiritual, remember that you make a list when you go to the grocery store. It’s a thousand times more important to know what you’re looking for in a partner?

First of all, as a Christian you will obviously be praying for God’s guidance in your selection of a mate. But don’t pray blindly. The Bible tells us that God wants to give us the desires of our heart. So be specific and honest with God and yourself about the traits you desire in a life partner. While being specific in what you want and don’t want, you also need to be realistic. That is, don’t expect to find a perfect person but rather, look for someone with whom you are very compatible.

Having said that, what should go on your list? That all depends on you. You need to spend plenty of time pondering, contemplating, and soul-searching. After carefully sorting and sifting all your likes and dislikes, your preferences and aversions, write them all out. Make a long, detailed inventory—and then narrow it down through a process of

elimination. Your goal is to end up with a total of twenty non-negotiable items.

For instance, many Christians have spiritual pursuits as the most important parts of their life. They

pray frequently, think a lot about their relationship with God, attend church and Bible classes regularly, and are convinced that the development of their spiritual life matters more than anything else. These people need to put spiritual passion at the top of their must-have list in capital letters. And I agree.

We could cite hundreds of other examples. If you keep your house, car, and desk clean and spotless—and if it’s important that your spouse share your passion for neatness—put this on your list. If you hate secondhand smoke, you should put “smoking” on your can’t-stand list. If you are super ambitious, and if you get bored by complacent, apathetic people, write “must be a go-getter” on your list. If you have a need for fun and laughter, put “great sense of humor” on your list.

Why Limit the Lists?

Since I believe that there are hundreds of qualities you might wish for in a lifetime mate, I put a limit of ten on your lists only for mathematical and practical reasons. Your “pool of candidates” is usually so limited that your chance of finding a person with every quality on a list of twenty-five or fifty items is very slim.

Here’s what I mean: A woman’s pool of possible spouses is comprised of single men she meets at work, church, the gym, her neighborhood, the softball team, and so on. So if a woman says she wants a partner with a college education, she immediately eliminates many of the men she knows. Likewise, if she wants a man free of all emotional hang-ups, she eliminates another sizable part of the population. With every criterion from her list, her pool of eligible, qualified bachelors shrinks considerably. We would need a mathematician to calculate the total number of persons required in the beginning pool for her to end up with a “Mr. Right” after applying ten rigorous must-

haves and ten equally rigorous can’t-stands.

Do You Really Need a “List?”


Some singles I work with absolutely refuse to build a shopping list. They say, “If I can’t find a person who meets what I know to be necessary for me to



Great marriages begin with two compatible people who are willing to grow, learn, and become even closer through the years.

be happy, then maybe I’ll need to lower my standards.” And here’s what they never say but what I’m convinced they mean: “I want to get married! I need to get married! Therefore, if I have to settle for less, so be it. After all, a less-than-ideal partner is better than no partner at all.”

I argue against this theme with everything I have. I encourage people to figure out the kind of person they need in order to be happy and fulfilled then to hold to these criteria to the very end. Finding the right partner is, of course, only half of the job. We also have to *be* the right kind of partner. But if you don’t choose a compatible mate, you could easily end up being part of the marital failure epidemic plaguing our nation. Great marriages begin with two compatible people who are willing to grow, learn, and become even closer through the years.

Dr. Neil Clark Warren is a clinical psychologist from Pasadena, California. He is a noted author and speaker on the subject of relationships and is the founder of eharmony.com, the only online relationship matching service for singles who wish to find and form a lasting relationship. His best-selling books include *Finding The Love of Your Life* and *How To Know If Someone Is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less*. 

When Joy Doesn't Come

by Carol Lacy Pell

“Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning” (Psalm 30:5).

How are we supposed to respond when tragedy strikes?:

When you pray for your teen’s driving and he has a near-fatal accident;

When you believe that your spouse will recover from cancer and she dies;

When you work toward a promotion and somebody else gets it;

When you prepare for a spectacular wedding and your boyfriend gets cold feet;

When you spend years decorating and furnishing your dream home and a fire destroys it in less than an hour;

When the frailties and failures of age cling to a body that will not die, even though the owner wants to go “home”;

When a lifetime partner is attacked by a disease and no longer recognizes you and in fact abuses you, day after day, month after month, year after year;

When terrorists attack our nation and thousands of people are killed.

These and other tragedies cause a

very long night of weeping. The shock, horror, and anger of September 11 will haunt us for a lifetime. Is our nation, as some claim, being punished because we have turned away from God’s laws? Or is it finally our turn to see what almost every other nation has suffered for a long time?

How do we Christians cope with these heart-wrenching, fear-inducing, anger-provoking, faith-testing experiences that do not promise rejoicing in the morning? When weeping lasts longer than a night and there is no rejoicing in the morning, what do you do? How do you pick up the fractured fragments of your hopes and dreams and go on? How do we dismiss such tragedies with the knowledge that we have a loving, caring God who says that He will protect us and watch over us, and that sickness, loss, and death are His enemies?

Can resolution begin as we remember that God did not promise us freedom from problems and tragedies? In fact, the Bible is full of them. But He does promise to walk through tragedies with us. And He promises to create something positive from them if we let Him (Romans 8:28-29). But to do this, we have to be honest with God and

we have to learn to handle our emotions maturely.

Manage Your Fury

When we recover from the initial impact of a horrible situation, anger often wells up within us. We want vengeance; we want to hurt the enemy as fiercely as we have been hurt. We want to lash out, to “get them.” We need an object of our anger, someone to blame.

Sometimes the target of our anger is God. When it is, we need to tell Him. “Where were You? I thought you were protecting my loved ones? Don’t I matter any more? I’m mad at YOU, God!”

That’s all right. Tell God exactly how you feel. He’s big enough to understand your anger, confusion, grief, and fear. Where was God when disaster struck? He was in the same place He was when His own Son was arrested, taunted, beaten, dragged through the streets, nailed to a cross, jolted upright, and slowly, painfully died. He understands anger and grief.

We cannot see in the future what God in His omniscience can see. “We don’t yet see things clearly. We’re squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won’t be long before the weather clears and the

In The Morning

sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us" (I Corinthians 13:12, *The Message*).

Other times we turn our anger upon those we blame for the loss — a doctor's wrong diagnosis, an arsonist, a drunken driver, or on Arab or Muslim neighbors when we cannot get to the terrorists. Some may even blame themselves: "Why did I let my daughter go way off to New York to work?" We want to lash out, to get revenge, but Paul reminds the Romans, "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" (Romans 12:19, Deuteronomy 32:35, NIV).

Also, be sure to share your feelings with a trusted and understanding friend. Just don't bottle them up. In this way we help to "bear one another's burdens."

Manage Your Fear

In the aftermath of the acts of terror in New York and Washington, psychologists dealt with very young children and teenagers who expressed fear. Some of them wanted to see normal television again, not horror. They needed to get back to everyday living.

Many adult Christians cried out, "Is this the beginning of the end? Is Armageddon next?" Vacations were canceled. Those who had to travel chose buses or trains or autos. People avoided tall buildings or events where large crowds gathered. Those who lived in small towns and villages hugged their trees. The terrorists' goal was to instill fear, and it was working.

But thanks to a determined President, other political and military personnel, strong Christian leaders, and our own determination not to buckle under the threats to our safety, Americans are becoming stronger, more united, and less confused about their reaction. Christians will trust an Almighty God to deliver us.


However, if your children are still struggling with fear, can't sleep, or having nightmares, it would be advisable to take them to a Christian child psychologist.

Manage Your Faith

"Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and

salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out" (Ephesians 6:13-18, *The Message*).

This passage in Ephesians describes the warrior's panoply of protection against the forces of evil as well as against the Evil One himself. Weeping, anger, mourning, fear may last for a long night, but to shorten the time we need to exercise trust in God, hope in His salvation, and have faith in the living Christ. "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (I Peter 1:6-7).

Carol Lacy Pell is a free-lance editor and ghost writer who lives in Solvang, California. She is also editor-in-chief of MaxIt Publishing Company. 



Overcoming Grief

by Dick Innes

Jeanette Lockerbie, in an issue of *Psychology for Living* magazine, tells about a minister friend whose wife died suddenly. Along with her husband, she had been very active in the church and was dearly loved by all the church members.

"I remember so well the church announcement of her funeral service: 'Come, and wear your brightest colors as we celebrate her home-going,'" Lockerbie reported.

"Fine. This congregation was just following the teaching this minister had given them for a score of years. Everyone did the 'right' thing: the minister bore up admirably and 'celebrated' with his people the death of his life partner.

"Months later, I happened to be a guest in the home where this minister was also visiting. I scarcely recognized the ghost of a man he had become. His deep sorrow at the snatching away of his beloved wife, suppressed in the interest of 'Christian' expectations, had worked its devastation in his life, both physically and emotionally.

"His 'brave front' was nothing but a mask to hide his true feelings. Such masks are deadening."

Some time ago in an article in *The Reader's Digest*, John Kord Lagemann told about another minister's reaction to death: "Recently the minister of our church had to carry tragic news to the parents of a twelve-year-old boy. Their son had drowned on a school outing. Later, the parents told me, 'The minister didn't preach or tell us to be brave. He broke into tears and wept with us. We will always love him for that.'"¹

It is obvious to see which of the two ministers acted in the healthiest manner. Emotions are God-given. In denying them we rob ourselves of spontaneity and seriously affect our emotional and physical health, as well as damage our relationships. As John Lagemann put it, without emotions life would be like "playing a trombone with a stuck slide!"

In giving us emotions God also gave us ways to express them. He gave laughter to express joy, words to express anger, and tears to express sorrow. At the grave of His good friend, Lazarus, Jesus wept openly

and unashamedly. "Weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15) is God's practical and healthy advice.

*To hide behind
a brave front in
times of deep sorrow
is to set oneself
up for greater
trauma ahead.*

Grief can be caused not only by the loss of a loved one, but also by the loss of a job, a home, one's savings, a loved family pet, or anything of value. With any of these losses, the natural response is to grieve — which may include a mixture of reactions and emotions, all of which need to be worked through and resolved. Grieving is not a quick-fix simple event, but a process that can take weeks or many months depending on the significance of the loss and our unique personal makeup. But whatever the length of

time, each of the following stages need to be worked through to bring resolution:

First, accept the reality of what has happened. At times of deep loss there is often denial. *This couldn't have happened to me. It's just a bad dream*, the mind reasons, and blots out the reality of the situation. As difficult as it may be, to resolve grief it is essential to accept whatever loss has occurred.

I know one man who was divorced 20 years ago. His former wife has long since remarried, but he is still living in a fantasy world with the dream that she is going to come back to him. As much as God (and the rest of us) hate divorce, and while miracles are possible, the likelihood of this woman coming back to this man is highly unrealistic. Until he accepts the finality of his situation, he'll stay stuck in the place where he has been for the past 20 years!

Second, realize that it is normal to hurt deeply at a time of loss. Give yourself permission to cry. It is one way of draining the pain of sorrow and loss. As long as our feelings are bottled up, we can't think clearly, we numb out, and get stuck – that is, we can't get on with our lives. Only after we discharge our painful emotions in healthy ways are we freed to pick up the pieces of our lives and return to meaningful living.

Some societies are much healthier when it comes to grieving. The Dani people in Irian Jaya, for example, says former missionary Elise Wight, weep and wail openly for several days when a loved one dies. We, too, need to weep out our pain. It is absolutely essential for healing. As Jesus taught, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4, NIV). Only as we mourn our loss do we find comfort.

Third, accept feelings of loneliness, fear of being alone, and a sense of hopelessness as normal following the loss of a loved one. *What is there left to live for?*² some ques-

tion. Forcing yourself to stay involved in former activities you enjoyed and going out and mixing with friends as soon as possible is very important. Equally important is to join a support group with others who are also suffering loss. None of us can make it alone. We all need the support of loving, understanding friends, especially during times of grief and sadness. As the Bible teaches us, "Bear ... one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2, KJV).

Fourth, there may also be feelings of guilt, especially if there has been a suicide or some kind of preventable accident. *Why didn't I do more for her/him? If only I'd been more understanding. It's my fault?* All are thoughts that can haunt.

I talked with one man whose wife committed suicide six months earlier. This man felt he was to blame. Like all of us, I'm sure he could have done some things differently, but he wasn't responsible for his wife's action. Suicide was her choice. His guilt was false. He may need professional counseling to help him see and resolve this.

Fifth, another common emotion in grief is anger. We may feel angry at the person for leaving us, or at our boss for firing us, or at God for allowing our loss to happen. Anger can be difficult to admit, especially when directed at someone we loved very much – or at God! If there is anger, it is essential to acknowledge and express it in healthy ways. If it's repressed, full recovery isn't possible and can lead to depression and/or physical sickness.

I read about one woman whose two sisters died tragically. She announced to the rest of the family, "There is no God. I don't believe in Him anymore." This woman was understandably angry at God, but instead of telling Him how she felt, she rejected Him. God doesn't get upset when we are angry at Him. He knows it anyhow and He understands. The healthy thing to do is to

tell Him how we feel so we can resolve these feelings. Otherwise we will stuff them and become physically ill, depressed, bored, withdrawn, or take out our hurt on others.

Give yourself permission to cry. It is one way of draining the pain of sorrow and loss.

In Psalm 109 David expressed his angry feelings to the Lord against those who were accusing him falsely. He prayed, "O God, whom I praise, do not remain silent, for wicked and deceitful men have opened their mouths against me; they have spoken against me with lying tongues. With words of hatred they surround me; they attack me without cause" (vs. 2-3). And then he poured out the bitter feelings he held toward these people, after which he prayed, "Help me, O LORD my God; save me in accordance with your love" (v. 26). It can be very helpful for us to do the same.

Finally, give yourself time to heal. After accepting and dealing with your painful feelings, which may take weeks or even months, refuse to keep living in the past. Live for the present and the future. Do something that will help others.

Remember, it is God's will that we recover and use our pain as a means to promote growth. This can better equip us to minister to others who grieve. He wants to help us – and will – as we open our lives to Christ and daily commit and trust ourselves to Him. As His Word tells us, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7, NKJV).

1. This quote is reprinted from, *The Reader's Digest*, August 1967. 

CHAPLAINS TAKE GOD ON THE ROAD



Montclair, California police chaplains, Neal Froese, left and Dale Rose right.

"Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes, or powerful, or wealthy when God called you" (I Corinthians 1:26).

Montclair (California) police chaplain Neal Froese, seventy-three, does not brag about his school record.

"My educational background wouldn't qualify me for anything," the high school dropout said.

But Froese said he is inspired by the above Bible verse because what he lacks in formal education has been made up by nearly two decades of ministry experience as the associate pastor at the First Baptist Church of Montclair. That and his passion for counseling police officers and crime victims have made Froese a valued member of the Police Department's chaplaincy program.

Froese and Dale Rose, fifty-eight, senior pastor of First Assembly of God Church in Montclair for 17 years, are the two clergy members involved in the four-year-old program.

The men wear police-style uniforms with badges that designate them as chaplains, and their lapels are adorned with brass crosses.

"I make it a point to tell people I'm not a cop," Rose said.

Their job is often as varied as the officers they accompany on patrol. Along with in-the-field counseling duties, the pastors follow up with victims and officers, perform weddings and funerals, and are available to respond to crime scenes at any hour.

The pastors are not permitted to proselytize people, but issues of God and faith often arise. And then, the chaplains are free to express their insights.

"Anytime I have an opportunity to share something of a spiritual nature with someone, I find it as much a blessing to me as it is to them," Froese said.

While Froese focuses on helping officers and victims, Rose feels a burden for suspects.

"I have prayed with people in the back of police cars to come to grips with their life situations," he said.

Both chaplains were deeply affected when former Officer Amy Nelson accidentally shot herself in the head at a firing range on March 17, 1999.

"That was a hard day," Froese said.

Nelson was in a coma for several weeks and spent several weeks in rehabilitation.

Froese remembers her dedication to her work and concern for Montclair residents. "She was a good officer," Froese said. "She was one who really cared."

The pastors ride along in patrol cars at least once a week. On a recent evening, Froese rode with Officer Shelby Kline while Rose partnered with Officer Jeff Hubert.

On one call for service, Rose and Hubert, thirty-one, responded to a Rosewood Street residence. After helping the mentally ill woman inside, officer and chaplain talked about the incident.

Hubert is thankful for the assistance the clergy provides. "There have been times that I've been at a loss for words, and the chaplains have been able to fill in where I might have been lacking," he said.

Kline and Froese responded to a call at an apartment complex on Kimberly Avenue. At the scene, they discovered an infant boy whom they suspected had been abandoned. Froese assisted as the

child was taken to the station and transferred to the county Children's Protective Services.

Kline, fifty-five, appreciates the opportunity to share his thoughts with Froese. "He's a good sounding board because he's midway between us and the civilians," the officer said.

Police Sgt. Tim Grinstead, the program's director, said confidentiality between officer and chaplain is essential. "The things they talk about in the car stay in the car," he said.

Grinstead, forty-four, said

officers often witness or participate in traumatic events that impact them emotionally and physically.

"Police officers see things that people don't normally see in a lifetime," he said.

While some officers were cautious at first about riding with chaplains, that soon changed. "Within a short period of time, they were being requested by the officers," Grinstead said.

Between 1997 and 2000, the chaplains logged more than 2500 volunteer hours.

"Both Neal and Dale have been outstanding," Grinstead said.

The program is looking to add a Spanish-speaking chaplain to its roster. Candidates must be certificated clergy and have the support of a local church.

Neal Froese is the husband of June Froese, office manager of the Narramore Christian Foundation. This article was first published in their local newspaper, the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*, Steve O'Sullivan, editor. Used by permission. (C-4)



THE GOLDEN RULE: DON'T MISAPPLY

by Karen Johnson Zurheide

When I was a child, my parents — and a long list of teachers at both school and church — taught me the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Today’s world is full of competing philosophies, including “Do unto others *before* they do unto you,” “Nice guys finish last,” and “Winning isn’t everything — it’s the only thing.” But the words first taught by Jesus about 2000 years ago continue to express the best way to treat others — and the way we would each like to be treated.

Besides being simply the right thing to do, one can observe that practicing the Golden Rule usually benefits its adherents, at least in the long run. People often quote another Bible maxim in support of this observation: “You reap what you sow” or in less agricultural language, “What goes around, comes around.” Generations of human experience indicate that following the age-old, ageless Rule of Rules makes good sense.

I try to pass this truth on to my children, both by my example and by explicit teaching. Often I find myself suggesting to them — especially as they endlessly pick on each other in the back seat of the car — that rather than paying back a sibling with ill-treatment, they might respond to that sibling as they would like to be treated.

NOT SO GOLDEN

As one who was taught the Golden Rule, who tries to live it out, and who teaches it to her children, it has not been easy to accept what I was surprised to discover in the early years of my now 24-year marriage. The Golden Rule does



IT IF YOU WANT A HAPPY MARRIAGE

not always work between husband and wife! How can that possibly be? Surely if I expect to be respected, listened to and treated as worthwhile in my marriage, then that's how I need to treat my spouse. If I want to be forgiven, then I need to be willing to forgive. If I don't want to be lied to, then I ought not to lie. That's all true.

But consider this everyday marital interaction. Reunited with my husband at the end of a long day, I want to hear everything that happened to him since we were last together. So I, of course, tell him every detail of my day. But if he longs for some space, a bit of peace and quiet, then perhaps the short version of my day's events would be more than enough to satisfy his information needs at that point!

Or suppose my husband has some time off from work coming up, for which I arrange a trip to the lake. That's how I would choose to get away and forget about work for awhile, but maybe my husband would rather tackle a project at home as a way to escape his job frustrations.

Or imagine that my husband and I have just had a disagreement. We've worked through it and resolved things fairly well. Now I'm ready to get back to normal, wanting to hug and chat about other things. But perhaps my husband needs a brief break from me, without touching or conversation. Should I force my relational style on him at that moment?

INHERENT DIFFERENCES

It's at such junctures that following the Golden Rule too literally can get spouses into big trouble. For if I "do unto" my spouse as I would like him to "do unto" me, then I am basing my treatment of him on my likes and dislikes, on my

needs and desires, and I fail to meet his real needs. Instead, I end up making countless well-intentioned but incorrect assumptions based on the major fallacy that my husband wants what I want.

The Golden Rule means that we should treat others respectfully and like we want to be treated. It does not mean we should do everything for our mates that we want them to do for us. Even with a very compatible couple, a husband and wife are two entirely different people. We each have different personalities, different families of origin, different life experiences — not to mention being different genders — all of which make for different needs and wants. I want to be left alone when I'm sick, while my husband likes more TLC. One of us is more sensitive to criticism than the other. One of us enjoys socializing more than the other. We grieve differently. We relate to our children and our parents differently. We shouldn't try to treat our mates the identical way we want to be treated.

It's like buying gifts for other people. Our natural inclination is to buy what we ourselves would enjoy. But that's only good for the recipient if the recipient is like us. The best gifts take into account the unique preferences of the recipients. And how do we get the information we need for this kind of effective giving? By careful observation. Or more simply, and more accurately, by asking. We ask people to make holiday gift lists. We ask what they want for their birthdays, just like we might like to be asked.

AN ALTERNATIVE RULE

It only makes sense that we should ask our spouses to teach us about their needs and expectations in our day-to-day living together.

Directly asking my husband what he wants from me may sound stilted, but it is far better than assuming incorrectly. I learned that the hard way!

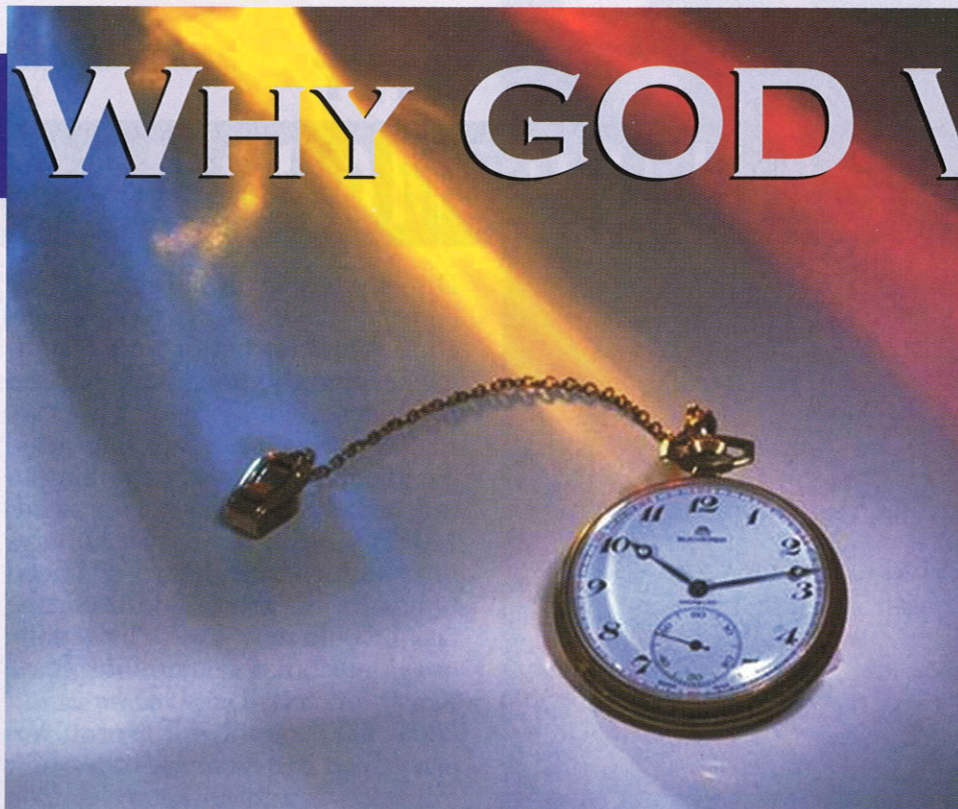
Not to leave my needs out of the equation, I must also be willing to tell my husband what I want. Admittedly, I'd rather that he intuitively understood the words I need to hear or the touch I desire or the task I would most like to have done or the meal that would most please me. *If he really loved me he would know*, I think to myself. Not so. We each need to teach the other how to please us, rather than relying on the magic of lovers' intuition.

While our differences often provide the very spice that keeps our marriage appetizing, they also mean that my husband and I can't both always get what we want at any moment. Compromises and sacrifices are necessary along the way. But with differences communicated, it is easier to work things out so that both partners have needs and desires regularly met.

Having known my husband a long time, I can make some accurate assumptions about his wishes. I know he prefers tea to coffee, and that he takes more sugar in his beverages than I do. But as we relate to each other daily in matters small and big, I still have to remind myself that he and I are not the same. As I continue to grow in understanding him, I am better able to accept the differences between us as basically good. I can more fully embrace my husband as he is. And I can more successfully follow the Couples' Corollary to the Golden Rule: "Do unto your mate as your mate would have you do." After all, isn't that what we would like our spouses to do for us?

Maybe someday I'll pass those wise words on to my children. 🐾

WHY GOD WAITS



by Richard Bauman

In the film, “The Horse Whisperer,” there is a scene where Pilgrim, the horse, escapes the confines of the corral and bolts blindly for open land. Instead of chasing after him, Tom, the horse’s trainer, shouts, “Let him go.” Eventually Pilgrim tires and comes to stillness in a green, high meadow.

Tom doesn’t rush out after Pilgrim. He casually catches up with him. He doesn’t rush up to the horse. Nor does he become angry and abusive toward the confused and terrified Pilgrim. He doesn’t even call to the horse. He doesn’t try to tempt the horse with food, to lure him back to the barn with him. He simply gives Pilgrim plenty of room.

He says nothing to the horse. He comes within a few hundred feet of the horse, but no closer. Tom does just one thing for Pilgrim – he sits patiently, watching him, his eyes fixed on Pilgrim. He sits in that meadow and never takes his eyes off the horse.

He doesn’t say even one word. He doesn’t inch toward the confused,

psychologically crippled horse. He just sits and watches him, focusing his loving energy on that incredibly damaged animal.

Pilgrim was maimed through no fault of his own. The victim of human misjudgment and carelessness, he was horribly injured and wants nothing to do with people. Humans are his bane. They represent pain, suffering and abandonment. Tom wants to help Pilgrim, but the horse doesn’t understand that. All he knows is that humans are tantamount to pain.

Tom has been blessed with insight into horses. He comprehends horses in a way few other persons do. He discerns the pain, the anguish and the hatred Pilgrim has for him and all humans.

So Tom sits absolutely still – and waits – and watches – hour after hour. Ever so slowly, imperceptibly at first, the distance between Tom and Pilgrim starts to shrink. Without perceiving any significant movement, man and horse come closer together. Finally, Pilgrim is standing right in front of Tom. Only then does Tom rise – slowly, lovingly – to meet Pilgrim. Gently he reaches out and strokes the horse’s face, touch-

ing him gently. He puts his cheek on Pilgrim’s cheek, as if to hear the horse’s pain. When Pilgrim finally senses Tom’s trustworthiness, he is willing to walk alongside Tom, and again return to the confines and the safety of the corral.

When that story comes to mind, it is that scene of Tom sitting in the meadow waiting for Pilgrim that I see. Why? Because I can be like Pilgrim sometimes. I bolt from God because of fear or pain. I flee Him and charge off to higher ground, to what looks like greener pastures, so I can do what I think I have to do. And sometimes God feels so remote or far away.

When I am in the wilderness, does He come running after me, calling my name, trying to coax me to return to Him? Perhaps for some people, but not for me. On the other hand, He never loses sight of me. He won’t let me out of His view. He stays connected, but at a distance that I feel safe.

For me, God’s relationship is akin to Tom’s relationship with Pilgrim. He sits and waits patiently for me to discover Him – most of the time. Sometimes God confronts me directly, but more often He is content, like Tom waiting for Pilgrim, to let me finally see Him again, and return on my own to Him. He never loses sight of me. He sits and watches and waits ever so patiently for me to come to Him.

The wait might be days, weeks, years or even decades before we even look up and see Him. Still, wait He does. Of course, it would be faster for us and for Him, if He would just come right to us and grab us. Instead, He just makes sure we have opportunities to see Him waiting.

Our movement back to God might be painfully slow and barely perceptible, like Pilgrim’s movement toward Tom. Sometimes we

Why God Waits continued on page 24 ►

When Family and Ministry Priorities Conflict

Dear Dr. Narramore:

I have been married for two years and have a six-month-old son. My wife is also a Christian but does not have the same passion for helping others and serving God. I enjoy these things but do not want to sacrifice my relationship with my family. I discontinued some of my work in the church when our son was born, but I have a burden to help others. I am concerned since my wife thinks I still don't spend enough time listening to her and helping out around the house and with our son.

Any advice?

Thank you so much for your thoughtful letter. I certainly understand both your concern and that of your wife. Many women find their primary identities in their relationships (especially in the home), while many men find their primary identities in their work — including ministry. I value your desire to put your family first, but also your desire to minister outside the home. The tension you mention is very common among pastors and other full-time Christian workers, as well as Christian laypersons. I believe that each couple needs to work out their own solution to this tension. This often takes a good friend or counselor to



Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

help both partners think through their own needs and the needs of their spouse. I would offer, however, some general principles to guide your thinking as you carry out your discussions.

1. Most husbands and wives never find a perfect balance between family and ministry. This is a tension that we all need to keep in mind and periodically recheck to see that we are reaching as good a balance as we can.
2. Biblically, our most important calling is to become Christlike in character. Often, the most difficult place to do that is in close relationships within the home. Ministry and serving others is vital to living a fulfilled and meaningful life, but being like Christ is even more important than working for Him!
3. Work and ministry, as important as they are, can serve as escapes from the hard work it sometimes take

to build a great marriage and meaningful relationships with our children. I think that every man in your circumstances should ask himself honestly, *How much am I working outside the home because God is calling me to do that, and how much is it because that is what I like doing best or feel most comfortable in doing?* Remember that Jesus only spent three years of His entire life in ministry! The rest were spent with His family and friends and doing carpentry!



Sometimes a spouse is actually not as concerned about the amount of time spent with his or her mate as the quality of the time they have together.”

4. Sometimes a spouse is actually not as concerned about the amount of time spent with his or her mate as the quality of the time they have together. I wonder if your wife is feeling overwhelmed by parenting a very young child. (That, by the way, would be normal since young children demand a lot from their caregivers!) It may be that she needs your sensitivity and help with your son. Or she may simply need some help around the house. When our children were young, we occasionally had a woman in to help Kathy with the housework. We found that relieved a lot of pressure on us both!

5. Many couples have found that if they think together creatively, they do not have to choose between ministry and family. Instead, they find some ways of ministering together as a family, or of having ministry grow out of family. For example, as your son grows older, you will have many opportunities to get to know his friends and the parents of his friends. If they see you having a wonderful Christian home, you will have a great foundation from which to share your faith in Christ with them. You may also have opportunities to do informal counseling as people will turn to you as a wise couple who seems to be doing very well in your

Conflict continued on page 24 ►



Students and faculty of the new doctoral program in Christian Counseling in Manila.

Christian Counseling Program Opens in Manila

Dr. and Mrs. Bruce Narramore and Dr. and Mrs. Bill Kirwan recently traveled to the Philippines for the opening of a new doctoral program in Christian Counseling offered by the Asia Graduate School of Theology. This program, the only one of its kind in the entire country, has been established to train a group of committed Christians who will take leadership in developing critically needed Christian counseling and mental health services throughout that nation. There is a high incidence of drug addiction, spousal and child abuse, infidelity

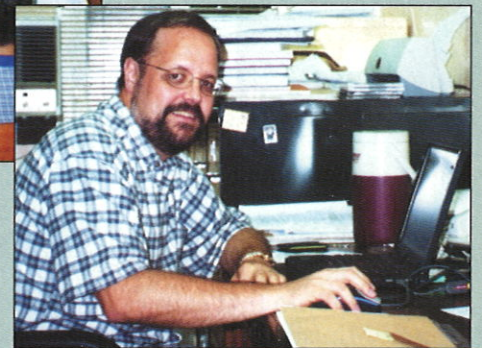


Dr. Bill Kirwan (above) lecturing to master's degree students in Christian Counseling. Dr. Fred Gingrich (right) director of the doctoral program.

and homosexuality in the Philippine culture.

The Asia Graduate School of Theology is a consortium of nine evangelical seminaries in the greater Manila area. Each master's

or doctoral program has a director or coordinator from one of the participating seminaries. The doctoral program in Christian Counseling is under the direction of Dr.



Fred Gingrich of the Alliance Biblical Seminary. Dr. Gingrich and his wife, Heather, also a

professional Christian counselor, are missionaries with the Christian Missionary Alliance.

During their stay in Manila, the Narramores and Kirwans helped inaugurate the new program. At the opening banquet, Dr. Narramore challenged the students to not limit their ministry to just individuals and families, but to see themselves as servants of the entire cause of Christ in the Philippines by training and ministering to pastors and by offering biblically based and psychologically sound teachings on the Christian life throughout the Christian community.

Dr. Narramore then taught the first intensive two-week course in the new program. The course focused on the biblical foundations of Christian counseling, the dynamics of development of psychological maladjustments, and an orientation to in-depth principles of healing in the counseling process.

Dr. Kirwan, also a Christian psychologist and author, taught a two-week course on Biblical Concepts in Counseling in the master's degree program each morning and assisted Dr. Narramore in the doctoral course each afternoon. He also brought a bit of levity and entertainment to the festivities through the use of his skills as a magician!

The NCF is partnering in this important new venture by providing scholarships to students in the program as well as through Dr. Narramore's consulting and teaching.

While in Manila, Dr. Narramore and the Kirwans also shared with a group of Alliance Missionaries and visited the island of Corregidor, site of famous World War II battles. 🗺️

Training Opportunities for Families in Ministry



Refresh Program for Missionaries

What? A program specifically designed for singles and families who minister across cultures. Under the guidance of staff from the Narramore Christian Foundation and Heartstream Resources, the program offers opportunities for renewal in stimulating classes and discussions on topics like stress, marriage, parenting, and fitness.

Where? Camp of the Peaks in the French Alps near Grenoble, France.

When? June 15-28, 2002.

For additional information: email heartstream@compuserve.com

MK Reentry Programme: U.S.

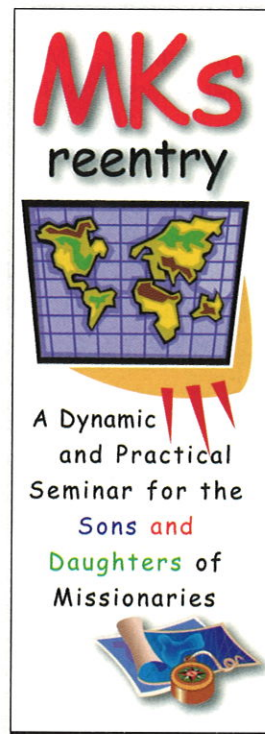
What? A creative,

cross-cultural, social, emotional, and spiritual program designed specifically for MKs by the staff of the Narramore Christian Foundation and Barnabas International.

Where? Southern California, on the campus of Biola University.

When? July 8-19 & July 22-August 2, 2002.

Cost: The only fee is a \$150 non-refundable registration. The remainder of each participant's expenses is covered in the form of a \$900 scholarship by the Narramore Christian Foundation.



Registration and additional information: email: mkreentry@barnabas.org

MK Reentry Programme: England

What? Re-Konnect: The first reentry programme offered in England to address the needs of returning MKs. Session topics include "Transition," "Third Culture Kids," "Dealing with Emotions," "Social Mores," and "Integrating Into Life in the UK." Small group sessions enable students to personally process their own transition issues, and professional Christian counselors will also be available for consultation.

Where? Thirty-five minutes from London in a beautiful manor house on a 150-acre estate.

When? August 17-24, 2002.

Who? The program is led by Marion Knell, MK Coordinator, Global Connections, in cooperation with the Narramore Christian Foundation and Barnabas International.

Cost: £100
Additional information and registration: email: marion@knell.net 🗺️

Tribute Gifts

Would you like us to join you in honoring your loved one? You can send a Tribute Gift or Living Memorial Gift to the ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation.

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HEALTH WATCH

Compiled by Eva Hallam Solberg

Is Fish Really Brain Food?

There is now evidence that eating fish can play a positive role in mental health. It may sound like a joke, but the brain is largely composed of fat. Fats, along with water, are the chief components of brain cell membranes and the specialized tissues enclosing the nerves. The anti-fat message promoted as part of heart-healthy diets these days makes it easy to forget that not all fats are “bad,” and that some types are essential to human life.

Although there is no proof of a cause-and-effect relationship, surveys suggest that groups with the highest fish consumption have the lowest rates of depression.

Fatty fish (such as salmon, herring, and mackerel) is definitely good for your heart. Omega-3s cut the risk of blood clots and thus lessen the chance of a heart attack. The American Heart Association now recommends that you eat two servings or more of fish a week. A diet that benefits your heart is likely to benefit your brain as well.

— *Johns Hopkins Medical Letter*

Family and School Connectedness

A recent study at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine defined family “connectedness” as feeling loved, wanted and cared about by parents, and being satisfied with the relationship to the mother and/or father.

It is estimated that American young people have lost parental time by an average of 10 to 12 hours a week since 1960, largely because of workforce pressures of parents.

Dr. Blum, director of the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health provided concrete examples of how parents can foster connectedness despite a busy work week.

Small messages from parents showing concern and hugs are important to kids. A note on the refrigerator that says, “Good luck on your test today,” or “How did it go in math class?” are affirmations that will be well received.

The study showed a strong correlation between adolescents who feel connected to home and those who also feel connected to school. Connectedness with school is defined as feeling that teachers treat students fairly, feeling close to others at school and perceiving oneself as part of the school.

“Generally, kids who feel connected to school are much more likely to feel connected at home, and kids who perform better in school are the ones who are told at home that school is important,” Dr. Blum said.

Overall, teenagers who perceive such connectedness tend to engage in fewer risky behaviors than do their peers who do not perceive themselves as connected.

— *Mayo Clinic Health Oasis*

Response to Love

by Ruth E. Narramore

Have you ever heard an unhappy person complain, "I didn't ask to be born"? The fact is, none of us is given that option.

But this is not true in the birth of Christ. He had a choice. And even though He knew that here on earth He was destined to suffer intense



Ruth Narramore

rejection, and ultimately a criminal's death on a cruel cross, Jesus still chose to be born. This was love in its purest form. And the love story didn't end in the cradle.

It grew as the child grew. Jesus was the very essence of love.

Although from the beginning He was denied the civility of comforts that were due Him and was offered nothing but a stable in which to lay His head, and although cruel men (ordered by the wicked Herod) were seeking to destroy His young life, Jesus never took on the hostile ways of others. His spirit was one of love. And because of this, Jesus Christ was able to demonstrate to the whole world the highest and truest meaning of LOVE.

It was this love that prompted Him to leave the splendors of His heavenly home to live and associate with sinful human beings. He had plenty of love for everyone, but even so, there were many who refused to avail themselves of it.

When Jesus singled out 12 to be His constant companions and chosen followers, these men had the special privilege of personally experiencing the love of Christ on a

daily basis. If anyone should have sensed an awareness of Christ's love, it should have been the disciples. But even with such a tremendous advantage, some responded to His love more than others.

Obviously, Judas was unable to appreciate the depth and richness of the love of Jesus. Although Christ loved Judas enough to come to earth and die for him, Judas never allowed the greatness of this love to penetrate his life. Instead, he remained emotionally aloof while becoming unnecessarily involved with the handling of financial affairs. Instead of being spiritually blessed and emotionally moved when a woman poured costly ointment on the feet of Jesus, he found fault with what to him was wastefulness. Although life with Jesus provided a perpetual ambiance of love, Judas kept himself sealed in his own self-centered crust and remained cold, calculating, and critical. Eventually, his callousness prompted him to turn traitor and sell the life of the Son of God for a measly 30 pieces of silver. Ironically, he did his dirty deed with the pretense of expressing his love, a kiss.

John was altogether different. When writing his account of the gospel of Christ, John often referred to himself as that disciple whom Jesus loved. But John didn't start off that way. Initially, he had such a temper that he was called the "son of thunder." But little by little, Christ's love soaked in and

changed John's heart. At the cross, it was to John that Jesus entrusted the care of His dear mother. John and Jesus had a special relationship.

So you may wonder, did Jesus play favorites? Did He arbitrarily choose to be closer to John than to Judas? No, not at all. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). He is just and fair in all His dealings and gives Himself unreservedly to all who will accept His offer of love.

What made the difference between these two men? John responded to the love of Jesus, and the more he responded, the more he sensed the warmth and beauty of God's love. And the more he experienced God's love, the more his personality was transformed. Eventually, the son of thunder became the apostle of love!

Judas could have enjoyed the same benefits from his relationship with Christ. It was available to him



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just as it is to all who follow Jesus. But Judas was unresponsive to the love extended him. How impoverished was his soul – how tragic his end! But for John, the beloved disciple, life was rich and satisfying – filled with the love of Jesus for all eternity!

own family. You and your wife might even, for example, decide to lead an eight-week Sunday School class for parents or an evening discussion group. That would give you a chance to hone your own parenting skills while also ministering to others.

6. Any time a spouse thinks you are not spending enough time together, that concern needs to be taken seriously or deep resentments and conflicts can emerge.

7. To take a spouse's concerns seriously does not mean that you can or should do everything he or she wishes. We are all different and in marriage we need to learn to balance our needs with those of our spouse. The most important things are to fully hear our spouse's concerns and then to discuss ways that we can do as much as we realistically can to meet them — without denying our own needs in the process. A few spouses can be so demanding that it would be impossible to meet their wishes. No matter how much you do or how much time you spend with your mate, it is never enough. When that happens we need to very sensitively say, "Honey, I wish I could do more, but I just cannot. I need to have a little time to myself each day." Or, "I would like to, but we have agreed that I will spend one evening (or morning, or whatever) ministering outside the family, and I believe I should fulfill that commitment." Sometimes these spouses are very demanding of the time of a mate because they had serious emotional deficits in their relationship with their own parents. They hope to make up for that in marriage. Unfortunately, a spouse cannot make up for the lack of good parenting in a mate. That puts an impossible demand on the spouse. When this is the case, the mate probably will need some counseling to work out those painful conflicts.

8. Finally, and most importantly, I would encourage you to use this conflict as an opportunity for you and your wife to understand each other in a deeper way. As each of you puts yourself in the other's shoes, God can strengthen your marriage in an incredible way.


I wish you God's very best in your family and in your ministry. 

might move a little toward Him, and then circle back away from Him ending farther away than when we started. Nonetheless, He keeps us in sight, aware that eventually we will look in His direction and see He is still waiting for us.

Why doesn't God usually come after us? Why does He sit and watch, unmoving? Perhaps because He knows the pain, fear or disillusionment that envelops us like a fog, and He has to be the steady one. He has to be the one permanent, unchanging thing in our lives. Whether we realize it or not, whether or not we want to admit it, we need Him to be fixed and unmoving.

When we finally come to God with our pain, the pain He has seen forever but we are only learning to see, and we give it to Him, He will help us grieve it and release it.

God sits and waits because He knows the way we heal is not in isolation and aloneness. We heal through His comforting touch. His comforting, healing touch, however, often comes to us through the hands and arms and hearts of other people. Those who sit and watch and wait in stillness, ready to embrace us once we permit ourselves to be embraced.

Richard Bauman is a Christian writer who lives in West Covina, California. This article was originally published in *Gem* magazine. 

LETTERS

I enjoy reading *Psychology for Living*. There is so much help in it. Reading it gives a person time to think things out in a quiet way.

— Mrs. CPC, North Carolina

Editor's Note: Please let us know what you think about Psychology for Living. We welcome your comments and strive to serve our readers better for the Kingdom of God. You can write to us at the address below, or email your comments to ncliving.org.



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