

The Advocate of Truth

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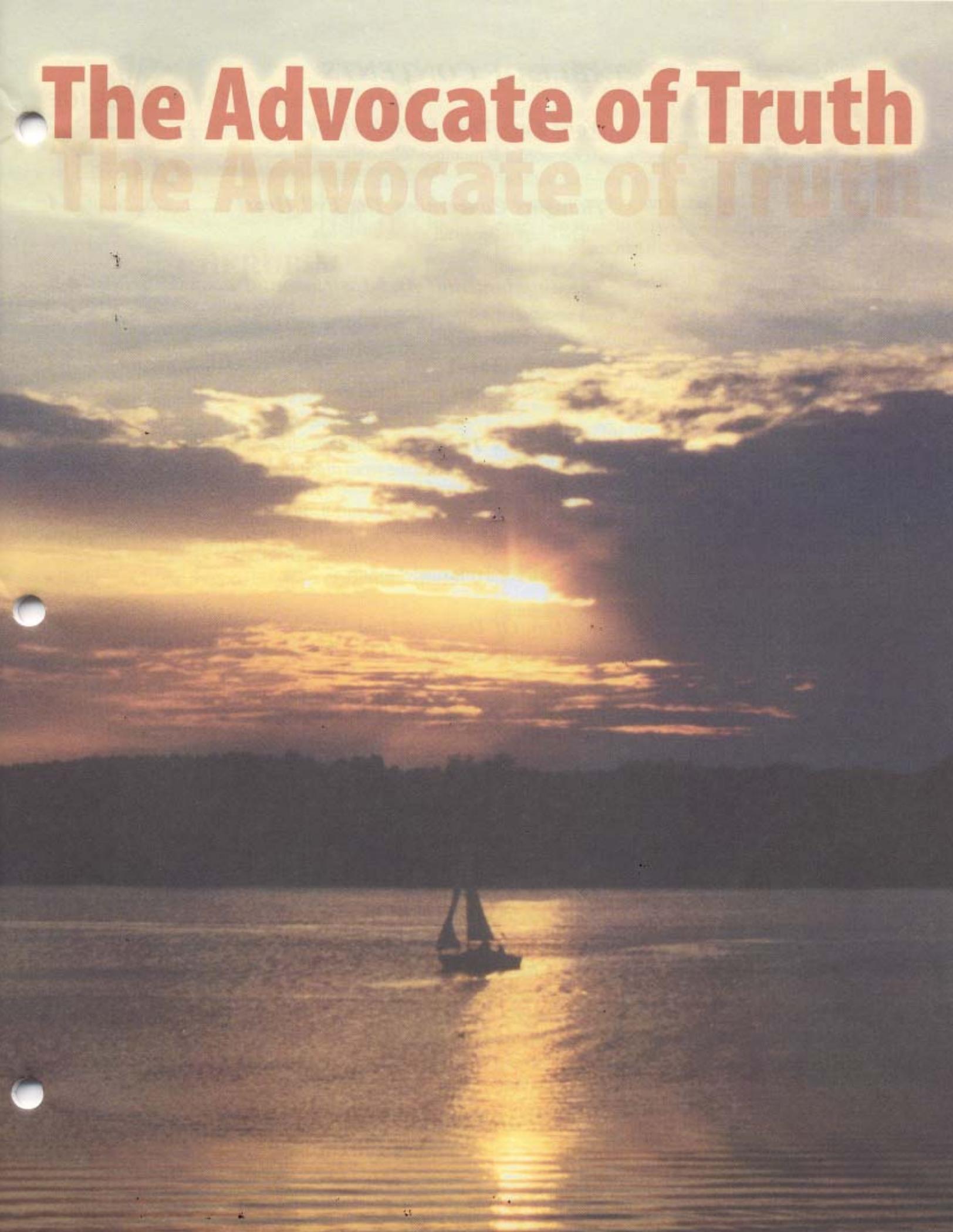




TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

Word Keys That Unlock Truth 3
 Our word this month is "cherubim".

Thoughts Concerning The Evil Heart 3-4
 The heart is deceitful above all things.

The Fundamental And Instrumental 4-5
 These two must work together.

Thoughts About The Virgin Birth 5-7
 Mary was a virgin when Jesus was born.

Discipline - The Lost Concept 8-10
 Many people think that the word discipline has a negative meaning.

Four Things A Good Father Must Cultivate 11-12
 Job is a good role model for us.

Mystery Of Dads 13
 What is this mystery?

The Signs Of The Times 14-15
 Preschoolers are strongly influenced by the examples they see at home.

Questions And Answers 16-17
 What did Jesus teach concerning the fifth commandment?

The Church Around The World 18-19
 This month we look at Salinas, California.

The Children's Pages 20-23
Sabbath School Lessons
A Story - "The Cover-up"
Games and Puzzles

To all our Dads: Have a happy Father's Day!

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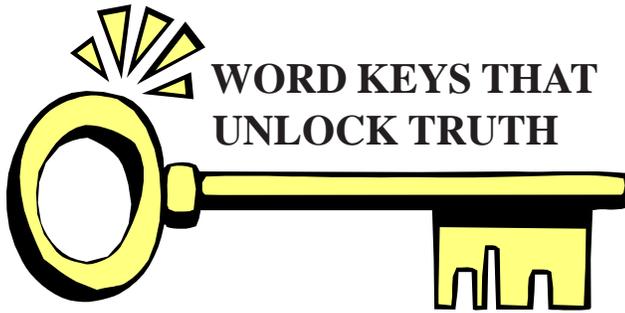
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CHERUBIM

Who or what are the cherubim? In the Bible, cherubim is the Hebrew plural of cherub. Have you ever heard proud parents call their baby a "little cherub?" In reality, they are describing their baby as a powerful winged creature with four faces and a body polished like bronze. No, the Bible does not describe cherubim as cherry-cheeked infants floating on a cloud.

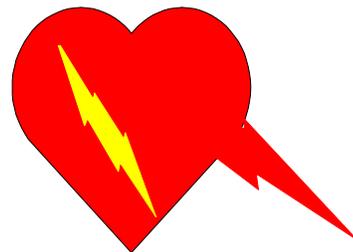
The Bible tells us that cherubim (who are considered one division of the angels) are highly formidable celestial beings who guard sacred places. The Lord Himself is said to ride on their backs. "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind" (Psalm 18:10).

The biblical descriptions of the cherubim are not always easy to visualize. The most detailed picture is in the book of Ezekiel. "Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures (cherubim). And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And

every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning" (Ezekiel 1:5-14).

As we see from Ezekiel's vision, cherubim are generally associated with the holy presence of the Lord. After Adam and Eve's disobedience, cherubim were sent to guard the Tree of Life against humans. Later, the figures of two cherubim were placed atop the Ark of the Covenant, signifying the Lord's enthronement and guarding the sacred articles inside. Please read Genesis 3:24 and Exodus 25:17-20.

THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE EVIL HEART



"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) This fear-inspiring verse should remind children of God to keep a check on their hearts. God emphasizes the heart throughout the Bible. The heart must be guarded! It is possible for it to be either good or evil. It will lead us in whatever direction it takes. The evil in men's hearts ex-

presses itself in different ways.

The evil heart is rebellious! Sometimes a little child rebels at the authority and requirements of his or her parents. The little child may not submit to parental control without showing displeasure. This same attitude may show itself in one's relationship to God. One may grow up to be insubordinate and not submit himself or herself to divine

guidance. One may even charge God with unfairness and become hostile to His will.

The evil heart produces evil thoughts! This teaching is found in the words of Jesus. For example, Jesus taught that the act of adultery is accomplished in spirit if one's heart lusts after a woman. The same goes for murder which is enacted in spirit by the hatred one may have for another. Thoughts can be as wicked as deeds.

The evil heart rejects high principles! Crimes like theft, unfair business practices, and the desire to get something for nothing all proceed out of evil hearts. Unwholesome practices all originate in the same place. Honor is laid aside when hearts are evil.

The evil heart is murderous! The murder of a fellow being evidences contempt for human existence. Murder is connected with such sins as envy, jealousy and covetousness. These evils must be guarded against.

The evil heart expresses itself by its using wicked words! One may express contempt for God by using blasphemous words. Often they are idle words which the Bible says will be brought into judgment. They may be

expressions of corrupt thought or vulgar and obscene stories. These things can only be enjoyed by those whose hearts feed on that which is evil.

The evil heart refuses to worship God! All men owe their lives to God and also the preservation of their lives during each day and night. They owe something to Him for His goodness. Many forget to be grateful and fail to attribute their blessings to God. They show no spirit of appreciation. Such hearts can be designated as evil because they refuse to properly worship the God by whom they are so greatly blessed.

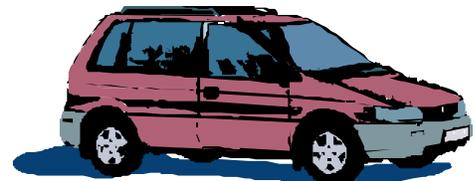
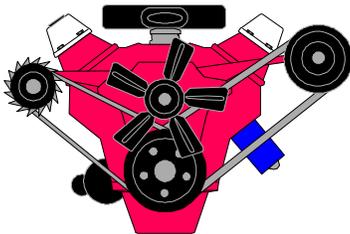
The evil heart rejects God's mercy! Many do not remember the daily mercies that come to them from God. They reject our Lord's blood which was shed for them. They look with contempt and utter disregard at His death. They deny God's Holy Spirit which He sends to strive with man. These are ample evidences of the wickedness of the heart.

"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matthew 12:35).

Contributed

THE FUNDAMENTAL AND INSTRUMENTAL

By Bond Tennant



The fundamental is generally simple. In many cases, the instrumental is somewhat difficult. Let us take the automobile for an example. The explosion in the cylinder chamber is the fundamental principle in automobile engines. Apart from that explosion, anything else that makes up the car is instrumental. Could it be that many of us pay more attention to the instrumental than the fundamental?

The instrumental is useless unless the fundamental is operating! We can park the car at the curb and forget about it. If the explosion in the engine of an automobile is discontinued and ceases to function, then regardless of

what you paid for the automobile, if it is not repaired, you had just as well sell it to the junk dealer. Without the fundamental, the instrumental is of no use.

In the same way that a car's engine is the fundamental part of the car, Christ is the fundamental element of the faith of a child of God.

Christ came to the Jewish temple. The beautiful and costly temple was only instrumental. Then one day He left the temple because He was rejected by the nation of Israel. The temple was instrumental, and it had to come down. It was no longer any good, and there was no fur-

ther need of it. That is the reason why Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.

Christ is the basic principle and foundation of everything in this life and the life hereafter! I Corinthians 10:31 tells us, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Men bought and sold land, and they even waged war to gain possession of it. Therefore, a man who had vast holdings was considered very wise. Suddenly, one day, Christ came to His own possession, the earth. Consider the unwelcome reception He was given. He was completely rejected of men. Luke 23:21 tells us, "But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him." Now what is going to happen to this earth, the instrumental? It is no good without the fundamental. Therefore, it has to be changed!

Down through the ages, the nations have forgotten Christ-the fundamental. Nation after nation has disappeared. Where is the great Phoenician Empire? Where is the great Alexandrian Empire? Where is the great Roman Empire? Where is the great Babylonian Empire? Where is the Mede and Persian empire? These empires have disappeared and vanished, or they are simply little, insignificant nations today. They put their emphasis on the instrumental and not the fundamental. They did not put first things first!

Let's go back to considering the Jewish nation of Israel in our thoughts. No nation on earth was so wonderfully dealt with, so wonderfully blessed, guided and cared for and given the precious Word of God. But let us look

at them. Christ came unto His own. What happened? When He came, they rejected Him! In doing so, they accepted the instrumental.

The magnificent temple - the foundation, the roof, the altar, and the decorations - everything about the temple pointed to Christ, God's Lamb! When Christ finally came, they drove Him away from the temple. They cursed and rejected the fundamental. Being only instrumental, the temple was of no use anymore.

When Christ was rejected, He "went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:1-2).

Let us consider the situation of today. Let us take a close look at many modern-day churches. After a few accepted Him, Christ established the church without a building. The church first met in homes. It had no specific building like the temple. It was more fundamental than instrumental. The homes in which the church met were not glorified. They did not pick out a particular home and put a steeple on it and decorate the place. They simply met in one home and then in another. A plain building was eventually established and set apart for the purpose of worship as the crowds increased. The main reason for the building was to house the people who wished to gather to worship.

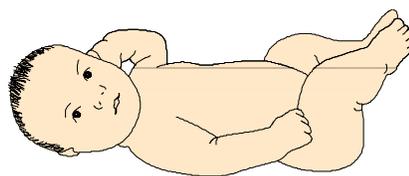
In our day, things seem to be out of hand because there is too much emphasis on the instrumental and not enough on the fundamental.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE VIRGIN BIRTH

By Elder F.L. Summers (Deceased)

(Reprinted from the April 8, 1957 Advocate of Truth)

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put



her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:18-20).

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold,

a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:22-23).

It seems strange that anyone could deny what the Bible teaches on a virgin birth, as the above scriptures are very clear on this. The Bible plainly teaches that Jesus was conceived in the womb of a Jewish virgin by a supernatural insemination of the Holy Spirit, wholly apart from any generator by a human father.

The Bible teaches that Jesus is a sinless man. It teaches also that men from Adam to the present today have borne Adam's sinful nature. They all therefore are subject to death as decreed by God in the garden of Eden. All men are created of one blood and all men upon the face of the earth come under the same condemnation. How then could any man be sinless and be fit to die for our sins as well as the Israelite nation itself?

Jesus was sinless and not subject to death until He took upon Himself the sins of others and died their death. Jesus was then of Adam's nature and condemnation. This fact alone will prove that sin is not transmitted through flesh. It is transmitted through the blood. Jesus was the seed of David according to the flesh, and this could not make Him a sinner. What is it that saves us and overcomes sin?

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14).

He made peace through His blood, not through His sinful flesh. Where did He get the likeness of sinful flesh? It was through His mother. That was the only human agent that took part in this virgin birth. It is through this fleshly connection that He was the Son of David. Remember that God has made of one blood ALL nations, so sinful heredity is transmitted through the blood and not through the flesh. After receiving His body from a sinful race, He could still be sinless as long as not a drop of sinful blood entered His veins. If it had been mixed with sinful blood, He could not have atoned for our sins. That very thing was why Jesus was to be born of a virgin, without a human father. This does not bring discredit upon the Jewish race, but we know they are from the blood of Adam, who are sinful the same as all other people, and are yet to this day.

It is known now that the blood which flows in an unborn baby's arteries and veins is not derived from the mother, but is produced within the body of the fetus itself, only after the introduction of the male sperm. An unfertilized egg does not, by itself, contain the elements essential for the production of this blood.

As a very simple illustration of this, think of the egg of the hen. As all know who have tried incubation, an unfertile egg will never develop. It may dry up completely, but no chick will result. Let the egg, however, be fertilized by the introduction of the male sperm, and incubation will quickly become visible. After a few hours, you can clearly see the small veins - or red streaks - in the egg, which denotes blood. This can never occur unless the male sperm has been united with the female ovum. The male element has added life to the egg. "Life is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). It follows then, that there is no life in the egg until the male sperm introduces the source of blood, or the set of life. For this reason it is unnecessary that a single drop of blood be given to the developing embryo in the womb of the mother. According to science, the mother provides the fetus (the unborn developing infant) with nutritious elements for the building of that body, but all the blood which forms in it is formed in the embryo itself, and only as a result of the contribution of a male parent. From the time of conception to the time of birth, not one drop of blood ever passes from the mother to the child.

Science has proven that the placenta, better known as the "afterbirth" from the union between mother and child, is so constructed that, although all the soluble nutritive elements such as proteins, fats, carbohydrates, salts, and minerals pass freely from mother to child, and that the wastes pass back to the mother and are carried away by her circulation, there is yet not a single drop of blood interchanged. All the blood in the child is produced within that child. The mother contributes no blood at all. You may think that this is all made up by one who knows little about the human body, yet we will see what medical men and scientists say about it.

In Howell's "Textbook of Physiology," Second edition, pages 885-886, we read: "For the purpose of understanding its general functions, it is sufficient to recall that the placenta consists essentially of vascular chronic papillae from the foetus (the unborn child) bathed in the large blood spaces of the decidual mammate of the mother. The foetal and maternal blood do not come into actual

contact. They are separate from each other by the walls of the foetal blood vessels, and the epithelial layers of the chorionic villae."

Again, from William's "Practice of Obstetrics," Third Edition, page 133: "The foetal blood in the vessels of the chorionic villae at no time gains access to each maternal blood." Also from the same book, page 136: "Normally there is no connection between the foetal blood and the maternal blood."

From Nurse's "Handbook of Obstetrics" by Louise Zabriskie, R.N. Fifth edition, page 75: "When the circulation of the blood begins in the embryo, it remains separate and distinct from that of the mother. All food and waste which are interchanged between the embryo and the mother must pass through the blood vessel walls from one circulation to the other." There are other quotations I could bring to your attention which say the same thing, but this will be sufficient to show the the blood in the veins of Jesus was holy and innocent blood; therefore, sinless and not being of Adam's race.

How wonderful that God prepared a virgin birth for His Son. When woman was created, He made her so that no blood would be able to pass from her to her offspring. That human blood is the result of the male fertilization. Since Adam was the head of the race, it is his blood that transmits Adam's sin to all men. In order to produce a sinless man, who would yet be the Son of Adam, God provided a way that man could have a human body but have none of Adam's sinful blood in Him. This is the very reason that in Christ Jesus there was no sin, yet He had the likeness of sinful flesh. Man's body becomes sinful flesh indirectly only as the blood touches every particle of it. When the blood fails to circulate to his smallest member, that member soon decays and dies, for in the blood is the life. It is the life of flesh.

Some have tried to explain the sinlessness of Jesus, yet born of woman by making Mary their immaculate virgin. That does not answer the question as to how Jesus was sinless, since it is through the male that the blood line runs.

It is a fact that Jesus took part as this Scripture shows; "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Hebrews 2:14). Here you notice that the human race takes or partakes of flesh and blood, and Jesus took part of the same. I believe that you who want to look up the

Greek will find it so. He then took part, but not all.

Conception by the Holy Spirit was the only way the virgin birth could be accomplished. Mary contributed to the body of Jesus, and He became the seed of David according to the flesh. The Holy Spirit contributed the blood of Jesus, "sinless blood." It is divine blood. It is precious blood. Judas confessed after betraying Jesus: "I have betrayed innocent blood." Our Lord was sinless yet He became like unto us with one exception. Instead of being conceived by a human father, He was conceived by a Divine Father. He therefore not only had Divine Blood, but Sinless Blood.

Let us consider corruptible blood, for sin has made it corrupt. From the beginning it was not so, but when sin entered, it became poisoned so that it was corruptible. As soon as death comes, decay sets in, and it begins in the blood. That is why the undertaker draws the blood out and places in its stead the embalming fluid. David said of Jesus that He would not see corruption. He was not embalmed, but was hurriedly taken from the cross and placed in the tomb. The reason He did not decay was that sinless blood does not decay. If you recall, after the death of Lazarus, his sisters said that by this time he stinketh, and he had been dead for three days. Lazarus was no doubt a good man, yet he had corruptible blood which began to decay as soon as he was dead. That is why meat not completely drained of all the blood will soon be good to eat. It was a command of God that the not people were not to eat the blood, for in it was life. Because the life is in the blood, God does not permit man to eat it. He does allow one to eat flesh, but it must be without blood. That was why Paul told the Christians not to eat anything strangled as the blood can not drain out. See Acts 15:28-29.

The Word tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. How could Adam's race be redeemed or his sins remitted? No corruptible blood would suffice and all men of all nations are contaminated with this sinful blood. To redeem this dead sinner, life must again be imparted. The only remedy for death is life. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his Coming" (I Corinthians 15:22-23).

This life is in the blood; therefore for redemption blood must be furnished that is sinless and incorruptible. There

DISCIPLINE - THE LOST CONCEPT

By Siegfried Maywald

For many people in our society today, discipline is thought of as negative, and, by some even declared as detrimental to the physical and mental development of a child. It is generally understood that all those who advocate discipline, restraint, and respect are only authoritative, but not loving and caring people. I think the main problem is that many people do not understand what discipline really is. To discipline means to teach, guide and direct to proper understanding. A good father or mother guides, directs, and teaches a child in what manner he or she should behave and think. The child receives direction and self-discipline, the ability to make the right choices. The ability of such judgment includes also discernment, knowledge that is derived from instruction, training and discernment, and the understanding of what is the truth. If a child is simply left to learn on his own, where do we find guidance; who sets the example; who teaches her to differentiate right from wrong or what is morally good and bad?

Why do we see in our young people so much disrespect for the elderly? Why is there so much crime, murder and general immoral behavior among the young folks? We now harvest the seeds we have planted with our disregard to God's advice. It is because the tendency of our educational experts in our society today is to not really teach how to behave or what to believe or think according to good moral foundation and truth, but according to man's wisdom and understanding. God's wisdom and concept of discipline has been discarded altogether and is now declared as inappropriate for our modern society. Man's wisdom seems to know better. But the results show otherwise. The education system allows each student to develop their own initiative to study and learn. We let them decide what, where, and how fast to do those things by themselves. What kind of progress do you think that develops in a child? Who tells them what is right and what is wrong, or what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in their behavior? Who sets the limits and standards for them? The question remains who will give them

guidance and direction? Who really cares for their future welfare and success in life? If no guidance, direction or limitations are given, we should not be surprised if our society turns self-centered, disrespectful, unjust, and morally dysfunctional.

In Proverbs 15:32 we read: "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."

In comparison, this would be like letting the flowers in a garden decide to develop and prosper on their own accord without the care of weeding and watering. But if no one takes care of them, the weeds will take control and eventually choke the flowers.

It would be just like leaving one badly rotten apple in the midst of a whole bunch of good apples, and, likewise, it won't take long till the whole bunch of them is infected, and they will all turn bad also. This all happens just because of that one bad apple!

So is it also with one undisciplined child when he is left alone among well-behaved children. His bad behavior will likewise, in a short while, infect and lead all the other children to become bad-mannered and undisciplined in their actions. God's word tells us in Proverbs 22:6 that we should "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." But to do this requires a loving and caring relationship; it involves time and effort spent with the child on an individual basis while she is young. It is important for a father or mother to recognize that every child is different in emotion, interest, and understanding, and parents have to accept those individual character traits and not place their own wants on their children. Every child acts and reacts in a different manner. Get to know your child. Let him make certain choices on his own, so he learns the effect of certain consequence connected with the decisions and actions he chooses to make.

The question we should ask ourselves is: Who loves the child more? The father or mother who lets the child do what she wants, which in the end brings her harm, or

the one who gives correction, guidance, and training and even punishment if needed, to help him understand and discern the difference between right and wrong and good and bad behavior. It is never pleasant to be corrected, but shows care for the child.

The response to discipline may be taken in several ways:

1. One may accept it in resignation.
2. One may accept it in self-pity, thinking that one does not deserve it.
3. One may become angry and resentful or
4. One may accept it gracefully and recognize it as the appropriate response of a loving father or mother.

God's admonition for children:

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many" (Proverbs 4:10). "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life" (Proverbs 4:13). If we listen and obey His word, we will receive those blessings. "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Proverbs 6:23).

"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee" (Proverbs 3:1-2). "My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble" (Proverbs 3:21-23).

Just like the discipline that is administered from a coach of a football, baseball or of any other sport who pushes his team to the limit to achieve success and victory, it is training and direction that is given to guide the team to success. So in like manner should parents train their children to achieve success in their lives. Nothing can be achieved if there is no direction, instruction and training given.

The Scriptures even tell us in Proverbs 3:11: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction." God, our eternal Father, cares and loves us, like our earthly father, admonishes, corrects and punishes if need be and does so for our own good.

We reading Revelation 3:19-21: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

"...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards (illegitimate children). And not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence (respect): shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure: but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit or righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:5-11).

God is not only our eternal Father, but also a demanding coach who pushes us to become His disciples, who then are able to propagate His message of hope to lead others, who are struggling with all the burdens that life carries with it.

Discipline hurts and is painful for the moment, but reveals a caring and loving attitude by the one who disciplines as the caregiver. Discipline is not meant to harm anyone, but to heal, to correct, to put in line, and restore behavioral and moral patterns. To nurture and guide children is an act of love and the greatest responsibility given from God to any parent. But a lack of guidance and discipline puts the parents' love in question because it shows a total disinterest for the character development of their children. If children grow up without any clear understanding of right or wrong, and with little, if any, directions, their daily lives will encounter many difficult problems. Discipline diverts long-range disaster. Parents can not make their children wise, but at least give them direction to search and always seek out God's ways and apply His wisdom to solve difficulties.

The Scriptures instruct us to: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24). "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die." But you will "...deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 23:13-14). And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

In Psalms 23:4 we read: "Yea, though I walk through

the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." With God our eternal Father, we have protection and receive guidance through His word. Likewise, our earthly fathers give us protection and guidance through instruction. The rod is used for protection, and the staff is to bring us in line, to guide us back to the fold.

We must understand that discipline without relationship produces rebellion. Parents who do not have the love, patience, interest, or care to take time out from their busy schedule to guide and direct their children should not be surprised when their children act in a rebellious and stubborn way, for they feel neglected and unloved.

Discipline with relationship produces happy, well-mannered, and successful children. Their parents act with patience, love, care and interest for the welfare of their children. They interact, teach, correct, and discipline to lead the child to a happy and successful life. Instruction and guidance according to the word of God is necessary to ensure success in their endeavor. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, and throughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17). "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15). As disciples we all have to walk according to the will of God.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:13-16).

Parents have to give guidance, but must leave their children also a certain amount of freedom to make certain decisions on their own so they can learn and experience the effect of his decisions.

In Luke 2:41-49 we read of Jesus' decision at twelve years of age: Jesus went with his parents to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover and when the feast was over, Jesus, only twelve years old, made his own decision and stayed behind in Jerusalem. He sat in the temple in the

midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. His parents supposing him to have been in the company of their kinsfolk, went a day's journey before they realized he was not among their number. So they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. They found him in the temple three days later. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Jesus, although only twelve years of age already knew what He wanted to do. He was not worried about His parents, but they missed Him and came to look for Him.

In Luke 15:11-19 we read of a story where "A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

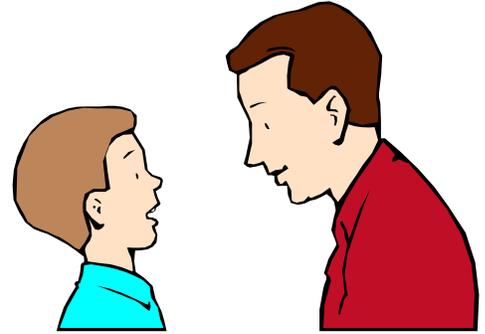
Did the father take him in? Yes, he loved his son. Did the young man learn his lesson? Yes, he realized the mistake he had made. He learned his lesson. Although the seed was planted early, it took time to grow in realization and effectiveness.

Therefore, parents must teach and instruct their children to seek the Lord, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:27-28).

4

FOUR THINGS A GOOD FATHER MUST CULTIVATE

By Bond Tennant



"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually"(Job 1:1-5).

"Moreover Job continued his parable, and said, Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me" (Job 29:1-5).

There are four things a good father must cultivate. Let us consider them.

CLOSENESS

There is an old axiom which says, "The acorn does not fall too far from the tree." This implies that our children will not be very different from the people we are, but that they will assume much of their manner of living from us. Job's children tells us that their father enjoyed family closeness and fellowship.

Each brother in his turn prepared a feast to which all

the other brothers and sisters were invited. We can imagine the joyous companionship and feasting that they had. The source of this kind of closeness may logically be traced to a father who enjoyed the presence of his family and encouraged it in his children.

Some time ago, vocalist Cat Stephens sang a very sad song. It spoke of a father who was never home and a loving son who said, "I want to be like you, Dad; you know I want to be like you." In the verse, the father is old and desires the company of his now grown son. He asks the son when he is coming home. The son's response was that he did not know when...but they'd have a good time then. The father's sad conclusion in the song is, "he's grown up just like me." The truly sad part of this song is that it is not simply a song, but it is lived out in the lives of many fathers and sons and daughters each day. Sometimes, well-meaning fathers who do their best to put bread on the table are leaving their children's hearts malnourished and lacking in strength that only a father's presence can provide.

The psalmist said in Psalm 127:3-5, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." A father who builds a bond of closeness between he and his children affirms the works of the psalmist that they are his "heritage from the Lord."

Yes, the good father must cultivate closeness in his home. He must love his family, not just in word but also in deeds. He must be a good father while his children are still with him.

COMMITMENT

A good father's commitment does not end when the paycheck is in the bank, when the bills are paid, or even when the children are married and away from home. A father is always a father. His commitment to his family should be limitless and never-ending.

Job's children had homes of their own and were grown enough to be independent, but Job's commitment to them continued. Job felt it was his responsibility as their father to send someone to his children to "sanctify them." This means that they were set apart fresh for the glory of God. They were not a part of his household then, but they were still bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. They were still his children. Job took his obligation as a father very seriously.

One of the best images of a loving father in the Bible is that of the Prodigal's father. This is found in Luke 15:11-32. Though the son had abandoned his loving care and the security of his home, the father did not cease to look longingly down the road that had taken away his son. The error he might have made did not matter. The boy was still his son, and he longed for his return. When the father saw him "a great way off," he was quick to prepare a feast to celebrate his son's return and to restore him to his place within the family. In essence, the son had never left the father's home. The son had remained there in the father's heart all the while. It must have been this way with Job. He was always a good father to his children.

We may logically say that Job's commitment to his children was evidence of his commitment to God, and it also could logically be said that his commitment to God was the foundation of his commitment to his family. Job's devout faith is witnessed, not only in his sanctifying and sacrificing for his children, but also in his words at the loss of his children: "...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). Job's commitment to God held fast even in the face of his greatest loss.

It is commendable for fathers to be committed to providing the temporal needs of their children. However, there is a greater commitment the good father must make! If the father is committed to God, chances are that his children will make the same commitment.

COMPASSION

Many parents think that their children are perfect. However, as children grow, we learn that we cannot keep them from making mistakes or doing things that demand

some type of chastening. Even when they are grown, good parents will still worry about them and care for their spiritual condition. Job was no different. He worried that his children may have sinned during their feasting. Even though they were beyond the age of chastening, Job was compassionate toward his children. Compassion can prompt a father to chasten his children. The good father knows that certain types of behavior will not be to his child's advantage. Because he loves his child, he chastens him. Proverbs 19:18 states, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." If chastening is done in love and for good reasons, then lessons will be learned, and good behavior will result.

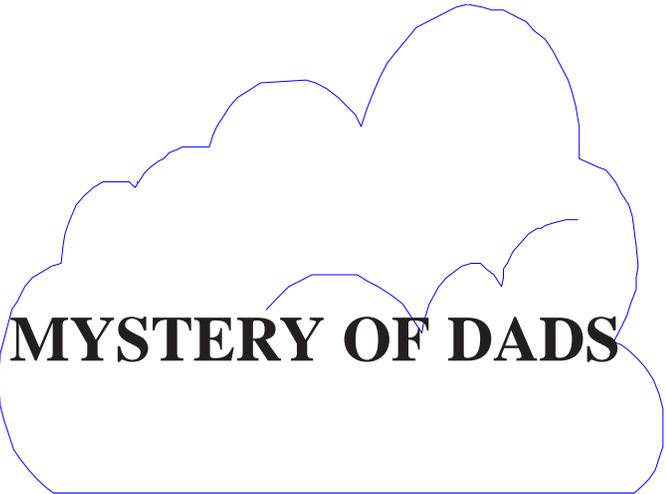
However, Job's actions did not come from a lack of trust in his children. It did not come from any evidence of sin on their part. What he did came from the heart of a loving father who wanted to be certain of the welfare of his children, not only in the world, but before God as well. Job did not fear the worst, but he did take action for the best. Job chose to make appropriate sacrifices that would assure forgiveness if by some chance sin had occurred. This was done out of compassion for his children.

How does a good father rear children that are loving and compassionate? He becomes loving and compassionate toward them and everyone else. He lives it before them as Job did. Job's children might have thought that their dad was a little extreme in making sacrifices when no sin had been committed, but they would never have a doubt about his love for them or his compassion for their faults. There is no end to the good father's love for his children. The words "love", "compassion" and "forgiveness" will always remind one of a good father.

CONSISTENCY

One of the most impressive things about Job's relationship with his children is recorded in Job 1:5: "...Thus did Job continually." His demonstration of commitment and compassion were not scattered incidents or occasional spontaneous acts. This was Job's as usual self. If, like Job, the father's habits are those that make for a close, loving, and compassionate family, then he may be called a good father. But if his habits do not lend themselves to this kind of nurturing, he must break them and start new habits. It is not those rare instances of deep affection or those temporary moments of parental anger that will shape the children's memory of the father. It will be the father's day-to-day self.

Now is the time to be a good father!



MYSTERY OF DADS

And may we not also say that some of the noblest and finest virtues which adorn our lives are father's of the mist and the cloud? I mean those graces which I like to call spiritual ferns, and which need much shade and moisture if they are to grow and be perfected. I mean ferns like humility, modesty, reticence, reverence, patience, sympathy, and even the finer and rarer sorts of love itself.

Is it not our cloudy experience which tends to make us gentle in our relationships with others? Is it not the very element of uncertainty in life that holds us in tender and reverent respect for our fellows who are also passing through the clouds? It is surely the finding of common experience that the more fallible we are in the precise statement of our doctoral creed, the harsher and more intolerant we become in our dispositions. Fathers who have no mists about their minds, no cloud of mystery, are very hard and dry and sapless, and I do not think you will find the treasures of the vine growing in heavy clusters about their lives. Yes, if there is no mist and no cloud the ground gets very hard.

You can not grow these things without mystery. You will find them in choicest and richest fashion where the clouds have gathered, where the mists have been thick and low, and where the ground is wet with dew and rains.

When a dad puts God first in his life, he becomes fertile ground for the fruits of God's Spirit. The cloud of mystery referred to here is "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Without Christ in our lives, we are only a withered vine blowing in the winds of the world.

IT TAKES MORE THAN BLOOD

It takes more than blood to be a dad.
Oh this is surely a proven fact.
I've seen men give their hearts to a child...
And never once think of taking it back.

A Dad is the one who is always there;
He protects a child from all harm.
He gives a child the assurance that he
will be their anchor in any storm.

A real Dad is a man that teaches his child
All the things in life he needs to know.
He's the tower of strength a child leans on.
The source of love that helps them grow.

There are men that children call Daddy.
Oh, he is their shelter when it rains.
He showers them with unconditional love.
As if it were his blood in their veins.

Whenever you meet a Dad that redefines the word,
Honor him with all the respect that is due.
Understand that he proudly wears this banner...
Because his heart is big enough for you.

It's sad but true that not all men understand
It takes more than blood to be a dad.
Someday if they wake up to their empty life...
They shall miss what they could have had.

To those men who will never be a dad...
No matter how what they say or do.
It takes more than blood to possess that little...
And it's only found in a man like you.



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

Research finds child's play reflects parents' bad habits

Preschoolers' tendency to 'buy' tobacco or alcohol is linked to what goes on at home

**by Carla K. Johnson
Associated Press**

Chicago - Preschoolers pretending to shop for their Barbie doll's social evening were more likely to choose cigarettes if their parents smoked, and wine or beer if their parents drank, a study found.

Researchers observing the children's play found that the ones who watched PG-13 or R-rated movies also were more likely to choose alcohol for Barbie.

A 4-year-old girl chose Barbie-size tobacco in the pretend store and said: "I need this for my man. A man needs cigarettes."

A 6-year-old offered the doll cigarettes and said: "Honey, have some smokes. Do you like smokes? I like smokes."

Parents who watched from behind a one-way mirror were surprised by their children's choices, said study co-author Meadeline Dalton of Dartmouth Medical School.

"It's a very humbling experience to be a parent and see your children mimic your behaviors," she said.

The study suggests that preventive efforts should target younger children, Dalton said. It was published Monday in the September issue of Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

The study included 120 children, ages 2 to 6. Each child, acting as a Barbie or Ken doll, shopped for a visit-

ing friend. A store stocked with 133 miniature items gave the children choices - including meat, fruit, snacks, nonalcoholic drinks, cigarettes, beer and wine.

The children could "buy" anything they wanted by filling a small grocery cart and taking it to a small checkout counter.

Twenty-eight percent of the children bought cigarettes, and 61 percent bought alcohol. The children whose parents smoked were almost four times more likely to buy cigarettes. The children whose parents drank at least monthly were three times more likely to buy alcohol.

Children who watched adult-content movies were five times more likely to buy alcohol, but the researchers did not find a statistical significance like between movie-watching and choosing cigarettes.

Researchers have recognized for years that young children are aware of cigarette advertising. A 1999 study found that 90 percent of 6-year-olds correctly matched the Joe Camel cartoon character with cigarettes in a researcher-led matching game.

The value of the new study is its emphasis on parents' behavior, said Dr. Joseph DiFranza of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. "If parents don't want their kids to be smoking, they shouldn't be setting the example," he said.

Comment

Child's play can also reflect the parents' good habits. It is important for followers of our Lord Jesus Christ to have and also display healthy and wholesome habits in living especially before their children. Children will imitate the feelings and actions which they see their parents display.

Teaching 'intelligent design' shows a bias, families say

They accuse the school board in Pennsylvania of violating church, state separation

by Martha Raffaele
Associated Press

Harrisburg, Pa. - A rural school board showed a clear bias against teaching evolution before it pushed through a plan to introduce "intelligent design" to students, a former board member testified Tuesday in a trial over whether the concept has a place in public schools.

Aralene "Barrie" Callahan, who was once on the Dover school board and is now among the challengers, said she believed the policy to teach intelligent design was religion-based.

Eight families are trying to remove the theory from Dover Area School District curriculum, arguing that it violates the constitutional separation of church and state.

They say it effectively promotes the Bible's view of creation. The school district argues that it is letting students know there are differences of opinion about evolution, not endorsing any religious view.

Callahan testified that board member Alan Bonsell - during a retreat in 2003 - "expressed he did not believe in evolution and if evolution was part of the biology curriculum, creationism had to be shared 50-50."

Board member Bill Buckingham complained in 2004 that a biology book recommended by the administration was "laced with Darwinism," Callahan said.

"They were pretty much down-playing evolution as something that was credible," Callahan said.

Proponents of intelligent design say life is the product of an unidentified intelligent force, and that Darwin's theory of natural selection cannot fully explain the origin of life.

The Dover school system is believed to be the first to mandate that students be exposed to the intelligent design concept.

COMMENT

The teaching of evolution also shows a bias. It is a bias against all other possibilities of creation.

Yes, there are differences of opinion about evolution. The teaching of intelligent design has nothing to do with the recognition of the true God, since it only points one to believe that "life is a product of an UNIDENTIFIED intelligent force." One may believe in intelligent design and still not be converted.

Intelligent design by God is self-evident. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1). Many today are like those mentioned in II Timothy 3:7, "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

DON'T CUSS OR SWEAR

Recognize: Swearing does damage.

Begin: By eliminating casual swearing. Pretend Jesus is always next to you.

Attitude: Think positively.

Patience: Practice it. When you are stuck in line or in traffic, ask yourself if a few more minutes matter.

Cope: Don't cuss. Consider even the smallest annoyance a challenge, and feel proud of yourself for taking care of it cheerfully and efficiently.

Stop complaining: Before you start griping, remind yourself that no one really wants to hear about it.

Alternate words: Develop a list of alternatives to the nasty words, relying on your own intelligence, a thesaurus, good books and clever TV shows.

Make your point politely: Some substitute words can be just as offensive if your tone is abrasive or you insult someone.

Reconsider: Think of what you should have said.

Make it a habit: Work at it.

Source: Cuss Control Academy
Houston Chronicle

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: What did Jesus teach concerning the fifth commandment?

Answer: The fifth commandment is: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12).

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ declared that children are to honor their parents. "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Matthew 15:4).

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother" (Luke 18:20).

Scripture is clear. There should be no misunderstanding. We are to honor and obey our parents. "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:20). "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise" (Ephesians 6:1-2).

2. Jesus declared that it is wrong to break this commandment. "But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother,

he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:3-9).

We must not twist God's Word to excuse us from our duty to take care of our parents. We must never ignore our parents. True children of God must pledge total obedience to God's Word and honor their parents. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1-3).

"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Proverbs 23:22).

3. Jesus Christ declared that in the case of marriage, a man must leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife. "For this cause (starting another home) shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife" (Mark 10:7).

A man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife. This creates a new family, distinct from the family of his parents. The union between husband and wife should gain priority over the union between parent and child. Leaving and cleaving are permanent acts.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

"What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Mark 10:9).

"For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband" (Romans 7:2).

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife" (I Corinthians 7:10-11).

4. Our Lord Jesus Christ declared that the person who loved his parents or anyone else in his family more than Him was not worthy of Him.

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37).

We must put God before all others, even before our families. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). Let us quote the preceding verse from the LIVING BIBLE. "Anyone who wants to be my follower must love me far more than he does his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters-yes, more than his own life-otherwise he cannot be my disciple."

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

Question: Did the times of the Gentiles end in the year 1914 as a certain group claims?

Answer: No, they did not. The Gentiles are still treading down the land of Israel. In Luke 21:24 we read: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." These Gentile times will run their course until the battle of Armageddon. There must first arise ten kings, corresponding to the image of Daniel 2:43-44: 7:24; Revelation 17:12-14. Then another (the man of sin) shall arise who will rule the whole Gentile system. When that comes to pass, the armies will gather against Jerusalem. This is the end of Gentile times when the armies are defeated by the King of kings, and the ten kings are destroyed. Then Israel shall be saved.

Question: What are the purposes for prophecy (the foretelling of future events) in the Bible?

Answer: Bible prophecy was not meant to be just a means of getting people excited about what is going to happen. Yes, it is great to have an inside track on future events, and this may help us to tell others about the truth and the real God of the Bible. God's prophecies were uttered with definite purposes in mind:

FIRST: Most of the prophecies in the Bible involve the future damnation of nations that were involved in wickedness. God hates sin, and this causes Him to judge those who are deeply involved in it. However, these prophecies of doom were not merely vindictive curses upon those with whom God was not pleased. They were designed to bring about repentance.

SECOND: The fulfilled prophecy in the Old Testament is a clear indication of the power and trustworthiness of the true God. If He has the power to make such predictions and can cause them to come true, we can be quite certain He will bring about what was predicted for the last day.

THIRD: Jesus foretold the future so that we would not be misled or taken by surprise. New Testament prophecy was often given to comfort and encourage believers. Read I Thessalonians 4:16-18.

FOURTH: The Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, which Jesus fulfilled, are certain proof that He is whom He claims to be - the Son of God.



Salinas, California

In the following photographs, we show a baptismal service taking place at the Salinas church by Brother George Tyson and Brother Manuel Gonzalez.





Chronicles 13:19-20.

LESSON I

ABIJAH MAKES WAR AGAINST JEROBOAM

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 13:1-20.**Golden Text: II Chronicles 13:17 (first part).****"And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter."**

NOTE: We have just finished studying about the reign of king Rehoboam. King Rehoboam died, and his son, Abijah, reigned in his stead. Abijah reigned as king of Judah from 915-913 B.C. We are going to study now about how he made war against Jeroboam.

1. In what year did Abijah reign over Judah? II Chronicles 13:1.
2. How many years did he reign in Jerusalem? Who was Abijah at war with? II Chronicles 13:2.
3. How many men of war did Abijah have? How many did Jeroboam have? II Chronicles 13:3.
4. What did Abijah say to all Israel when he stood upon Mt. Zemaraim? II Chronicles 13:4-5.
5. What did he say Jeroboam had done, and who had gathered unto him? II Chronicles 13:6-9.
6. Was Abijah still serving the Lord? What did he say about the Levites and about Israel? II Chronicles 13:10-12.
7. Did Abijah and the men of Judah call upon God at this time, and did God hear their plea? II Chronicles 13:14-16.
8. Abijah and his men slew the Israelites with a great slaughter. Why did the children of Judah prevail? II Chronicles 13:17-18.
9. Did Abijah pursue Jeroboam? What was the result? II

LESSON II

KING ASA'S GOOD REIGN

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 14:1-15.**Golden Text: II Chronicles 14:2.****"And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God."**

NOTE: In our last lesson we learned that Abijah reigned over Judah for three years. He defeated Jeroboam in battle. Abijah died, and his son, Asa, was king in his place. Let us study about the new king and see if he proved to be a good ruler over the people.

1. Abijah died and was buried in the city of David. Who reigned in his stead? II Chronicles 14:1.
2. Did Asa do what was right in the sight of God? II Chronicles 14:2.
3. What did he take away from the land and command the people of Judah to keep? II Chronicles 14:3-4.
4. What else did he take away from all the cities of Judah? What did he build? II Chronicles 14:5-6.
5. Did the people of Judah build cities and prosper, and how many men were in Asa's army? II Chronicles 14:7-8.
6. Who came against them? Where did this battle take place? II Chronicles 14:9-10.
7. What did Asa ask from the Lord, and did God answer Asa? II Chronicles 14:11-12.
8. When the Ethiopians fled, what did Asa and his men do? Did they destroy the Ethiopians? II Chronicles 14:13-14.
9. What did they carry away with them to Jerusalem? II

Chronicles 14:15.

show they were happy over it? II Chronicles 15:14-15.

LESSON III

KING ASA ABOLISHES IDOLATRY

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 15:1-19.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 15:8 (first part).

"And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin...."

NOTE: Asa was the son of Abijah, and he did that which is good and right in the eyes of the Lord. He took away the altars of the strange gods and broke down the images. He completely abolished idolatry and made a covenant to seek the Lord in the chapter we are studying today.

1. Who went out to meet Asa, and what did he tell King Asa? II Chronicles 15:1-2.
2. What further did Azariah tell all Israel in II Chronicles 15:3-6?
3. What did Azariah tell them would happen, and what did Asa do when he heard these words? II Chronicles 15:7-8.
4. Whom did he gather then with him, and during what year and month of his reign did this happen? II Chronicles 15:9-10.
5. What did they offer unto the Lord, and what kind of covenant did they make with Him? II Chronicles 15:11-12.
6. What would happen to those of Israel who would not seek the Lord? II Chronicles 15:13.
7. Did all Judah rejoice at the oath, and how did they

8. Why did Asa remove Maachah, his mother, from being queen? What did he do to her idols? II Chronicles 15:16.

9. Was there any more war during the reign of Asa? Was he perfect all his days? II Chronicles 15:17-19.

LESSON IV

ASA'S LEAGUE WITH SYRIA

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 16:1-14.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 16:9 first part).

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him..."

NOTE: We are going to study the last years of Asa's reign. In the chapter which you just read, King Asa made a league with Syria, so let us see if he did that which was pleasing to God.

1. During what year of Asa's reign did Baasha come up against Judah? What did he do? II Chronicles 16:1.
2. Asa sent to Benhadad, king of Syria, and what did he desire of him? II Chronicles 16:2-3.
3. Did Benhadad hearken unto King Asa? II Chronicles 16:4.
4. What did Baasha do when he heard that the armies were sent against the cities of Israel? II Chronicles 16:5.
5. Asa then took all Judah. What happened to Ramah? Did they continue to build Ramah? II Chronicles 16:6.
6. What did Hanani, the seer, tell Asa would happen because he relied on the king of Syria instead of the Lord? II Chronicles 16:7-9.
7. Was Asa wroth with the seer? What did he do to him? II Chronicles 16:10.

"THE COVER-UP"

By Olive Branch

Ricky was looking for a different target. That morning, he had cut a small fork from one of the trees and made himself a slingshot. He had shot at bottles, cans, and various targets, but now he was looking for something that was new and challenging to test his skill. His eyes began to twinkle when he noticed his mother's ornament in the flower bed. Mother had made it last winter in ceramics class and was proud of it. It was a little girl, holding a watering pot, as if she were watering the flowers. Ricky did not want to break it, but he thought it would be fun to put a rock between the girl's watering pot and her sun bonnet.

Choosing a good-sized rock, Ricky put it in the slingshot, took careful aim, pulled back on the elastic bands, and let the rock fly. It sailed inches away from the watering pot. Ricky chuckled. He was getting to be quite a shot.

He picked up another rock, fitted it into his slingshot, and sent it whizzing through the air. Ping! It hit the little figure squarely in the head. The pottery cracked; the head fell off in pieces. What was Ricky to do now?

Quickly, he looked around to see if anyone had witnessed his telling shot. No one was in sight. Stuffing his slingshot into his pocket, he picked up the broken pieces and the rest of the figure that was still standing and hurried out through the orchard. There was a pile of brush in a ditch at the back of the orchard. As fast as he could, Ricky pulled back some of the brush, threw the broken pieces to the bottom of the ditch, covered it all with dead leaves and brush. The evidence of what he had done was buried. He hoped his mother would think someone had stolen the figure.

He was putting on the last dead branch when he heard a slight noise and looked up to see his sister standing nearby. "Did you see anything?" Ricky asked quickly.

Minnie nodded her head. "I saw it all."

"You - you will not tell, will you?" Ricky asked hopefully.

"Well," Minnie drawled, "Maybe I will not tell. That

depends on you."

Ricky walked slowly toward the house. What had Minnie meant? He did not want Mother to know what he had done, even if he had not meant to break her ornament. He would probably get the paddling of his life. But it would not be like Minnie not to tell.

Later Ricky heard Mother calling, "Minnie, go down to the garden and get some radishes for dinner."

"Ask Ricky, Mother," Minnie answered. "He will be glad to go."

"No, I will not," Ricky told her in a low voice. "I got radishes yesterday."

Minnie snickered. "Remember what I saw, Ricky?"

"O.K., I will go," Ricky agreed wearily. So this was to be the price she would charge for not telling!

Shortly after Ricky returned from the garden, he heard Mother calling again, "Minnie, run down to the hen house and get some eggs."

"You go, Ricky," Minnie said.

"I will not," Ricky answered. "It is not my turn."

Minnie smiled like she was pleased with herself. "Ricky," she reminded him, "If you do not -"

Reluctantly, he went for the eggs. For the next few days, Minnie enjoyed the power she had over her brother. He did not only his work, but hers, too, with the constant threat of her telling hanging over his head.

That was not the worst of it. Mother had been so busy she had not missed the broken ornament, but he knew he was doing wrong by trying to cover up what he had done. His heart felt heavy deep inside. He lost his appetite, and he had trouble sleeping at night. He had not really lied to his mother; however, he had tried to cover up what he had done. He knew God was not pleased with him. He remembered a Bible verse he had learned in Sabbath School: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." He kept thinking about the verse all day. He knew that the brush he had put on the broken pottery did not really cover his sin.

Late in the afternoon Ricky went to his room. He took his Bible and turned to Proverbs 28:13 and read, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." He knew that already. His heart was getting heavier and heavier. He read the verse, "but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

What would happen if he confessed to his mother?

Maybe she would give him the whipping of his life, but he could not go on like this. Minnie would demand more and more pay for not telling, and his guilty conscience would get worse and worse.

Slowly, Ricky walked down to the dining room where Mother was sitting by the window, darning socks. He climbed up into her lap, put his arms around her neck and began to cry.

Mother put aside her mending and asked, "What is the matter, Ricky? I know something had been wrong with you for several days. Do you want to tell me about it?"

Slowly, Ricky confessed all about the slingshot and the broken pottery. Mother put her arms around him and patted him and kissed him. "You did wrong, Ricky," she said, "But I am glad you came to me and told me the truth. I will forgive you, but you had better not play with the slingshot for awhile."

Ricky took his slingshot from his pocket and gave it to his mother. He felt so much better after he had told her about it, but still there was a question in his mind. "Mother," he asked, "Do you think Jesus would forgive me too?"

"Oh for sure, Ricky. The Bible says, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' I forgave you and Jesus is more willing to forgive than I was, if you will confess to Him."

Together they bowed their heads, and Ricky confessed his sin to God. When he left the dining room, he was feeling very happy.

Later, when Mother went to get supper, Ricky heard her calling, "Minnie, come and peel the potatoes for me."

"You go, Ricky," Minnie commanded. "I want to play."

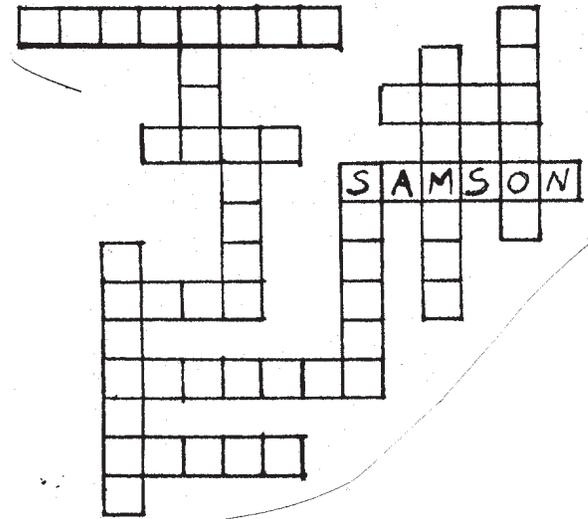
"I will not go," Ricky told her. "It is your turn."

"If you do not go, I will tell," Minnie threatened.

With a sigh of relief, Ricky said, "I have already told." He put his hands in his pockets and started toward the barn, whistling as he went.

1. ABDON 2. DEBORAH 3. EHUD 4. ELON
5. GIDEON 6. IBZAN 7. JAIR
8. JEPHTHAH 9. OTHNIEL 10. SAMSON
11. SAMUEL 12. SHAMGAR 13. TOLA

For 400 years the Israelite people were ruled by judges. Count the number of letters in each name and fit the judges' names into the puzzle.



LEARNING TO WORSHIP GOD

Learning to worship GOD

I'm learning every day.

Learning to worship GOD

As I work and as I play.

Worship is a word

That is hard to explain.

Elijah worshiped GOD

When he prayed for rain.

Worship is a word

That explains how I feel

When I stop to think

That GOD is very real.

Miriam worshiped GOD

With a joyful song

When she started singing

Her friends sang along.

Worship is a word

That explains what I do

When I quietly listen

to GOD'S WORD so true.

Learning to worship GOD

As I listen and as I sing,

We can learn to worship GOD

In each and every thing!

MY HERO

By Debbie Hinton Young

**As I ponder the love that I saw in his eyes,
A godly love, given without compromise....
I recall many times that he stood by my side,
And prodded me on with great vigor and pride.
His love ever confident, firm and yet fair,
Always speaking with patience, tenderness and care.
The power and might of his hands was so sure,
I know there was nothing we couldn't endure.
It's true, a few others provided insight,
Yet, he laid the foundation that kept me upright.
To me, he's the grandest of men on this earth,
Although he's not royal by stature or birth.
He's a man of great dignity, honor and strength.
His merits are noble, and of admirable length.
He's far greater than all other men that I know,
He's my Dad, he's my mentor,
My friend and hero.**

