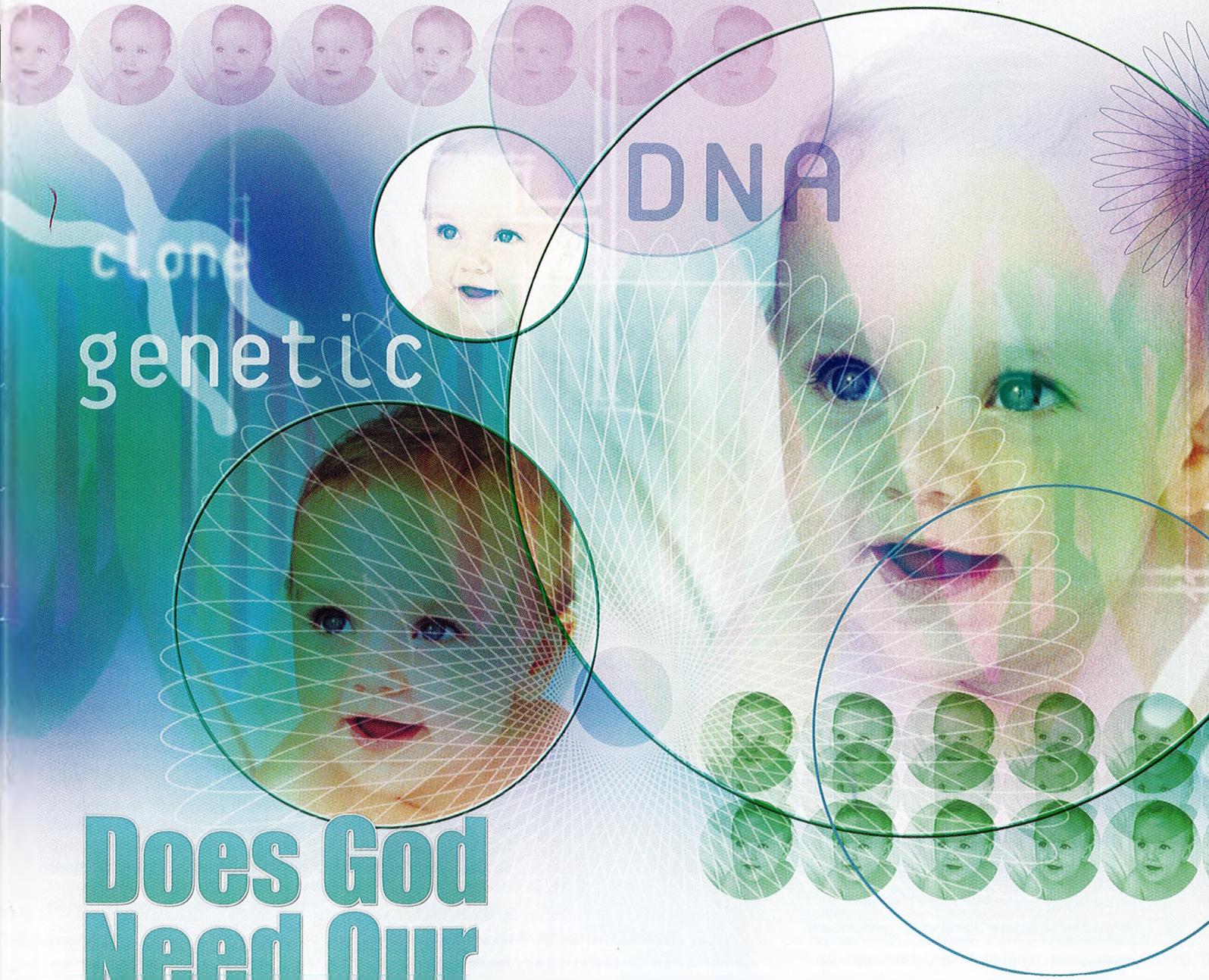


For Faith & Family's **LIGHT** Magazine

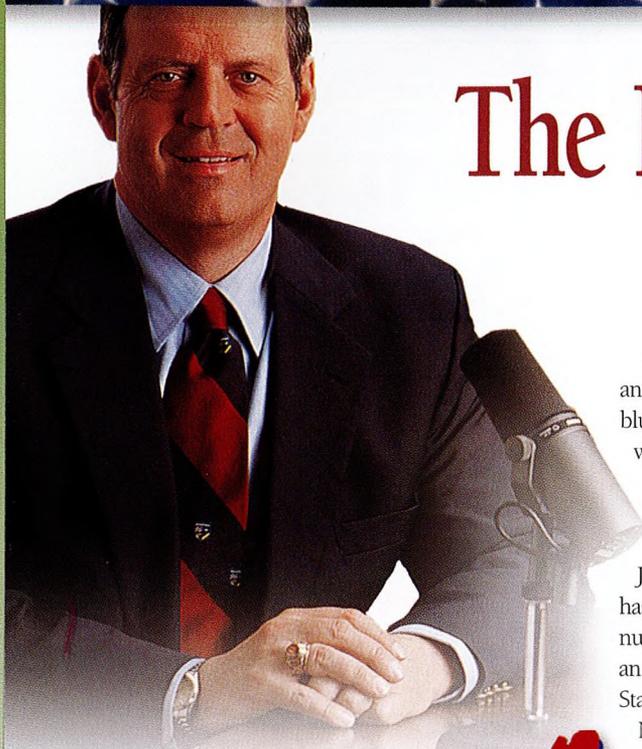


Does God Need Our Help?

**CREATION VS. MANUFACTURE IN
THE HUMAN CLONING DEBATE**

The Responsibility of Power

BY RICHARD LAND, *President of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and host of the nationally syndicated daily radio broadcast, For Faith & Family*



FOR FAITH
& Family

Our government faces such an opportunity in the face of blustery threats from one of the world's few remaining communist regimes, North Korea. In recent months, the dictatorship of Kim Jong-il has acknowledged it has been secretly developing nuclear weapons in violation of an agreement with the United States. It has banished United Nations inspectors, withdrawn from the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and threatened to resume nuclear missile tests. The North Koreans have demanded negotiations with Washington, seeking promises of U.S. "non-aggression" militarily in exchange for their verifiable abdication of nuclear weapons development.

These threats come from a regime that appears to be struggling to maintain its grip on power. North Korea has suffered for half a century under a cruel mixture of Communism and dictator worship. The regime has suppressed all human rights. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, of which I am a member, includes North Korea as one of the worst offenders on its list of recommended "countries of particular concern." When North Korean officials discover people carrying Bibles in public, distributing religious literature, or engaging in unauthorized reli-



Though named the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea is not a democracy. Since 1948, the country has had a Communist-style dictatorship. In recent years its government has focused on building its military while more than two million North Koreans have died of starvation. The country is among the worst human rights violators in the world, with penalties of imprisonment, torture, and execution for those who engage in unauthorized religious activities, including the carrying of Bibles in public, the distribution of religious literature, or the public expression of religious beliefs.

gious activities such as public religious expression or persuasion, they are arrested and imprisoned, then tortured and, at times, executed.

In response to a widespread famine, the government has allowed its own people—including children—to starve to death as it fed its massive military industry in an attempt to maintain its lock on power. Except for the elites who serve

as the jailers, North Korea can legitimately be described as one massive concentration camp.

Now in a high-stakes international poker game, it seeks to bargain with the only card it has left, and a wicked card it is—the threat of nuclear attack.

In response to this reckless menace, America can demonstrate what should be at the heart of its foreign policy—freedom and respect for human

One of the blessings the United States possesses as arguably the world's sole superpower is its great influence around the globe. With

this position, however, comes grave responsibility. By taking principled stands at critical times in the course of world events, our country not only can affirm the morality of particular policy choices but speak forcibly against competing policies. In so doing, the U.S. can help secure liberties for many citizens whose rights of speech, association, and religion might otherwise be restricted or denied.

"I pray that the White House will make human rights a priority in dealing with North Korea. It is the right thing to do."

RICHARD LAND

rights. Those qualities should be the right and the experience of every human being on the planet. To the extent they become less a dream and more a reality around the globe, the world becomes a more secure place.

In January, I joined with sixteen other leaders who are concerned about religious liberty and other human rights internationally, and in North Korea specifically, to issue a statement on U.S. relations with that country's government. In our statement, which was published in the *Wall Street Journal*, we recommended that President Bush agree to negotiations with North Korea on the condition that the communist regime's human rights record be a part of the discussion. This would include, we said, negotiations about permitting "institutions that promote such human rights as the free exchange of people, religious liberty, open borders and family reunification."

Our recommendations also included requests for the president to:

1. Make the predicament of North Korean refugees and defectors a priority.
2. Announce the primary U.S. goal toward North Korea is "the promotion of democracy so that its people can enjoy the same rights and progress enjoyed by the people of South Korea."
3. Strengthen our public diplomacy toward North Korea, including an increase in funds for the Commission on International Religious Freedom to investigate the regime's religious persecution.

These recommendations would focus the attention and policies of our country and other democracies on freedom, self-determination, and respect for human rights for the people of North Korea rather than rewarding and propping up their oppressive rulers as an intermediate

means to "stabilize" a dangerous international situation. Consequently, if we say we're willing to talk and we say we want to include human rights and freedom in those talks, the Pyongyang regime is placed in the position of defending why it refuses to talk about human rights or freedom. Our goal is not just the maintenance of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula but freedom for all the people on the Korean peninsula and in the region.

Our recommendations have a successful precedent in recent history. Most of us recall that the nuclear threat of the early 1970s was the Soviet Union. Faced with demands for negotiations from the Kremlin and pressure from U.S. allies, President Nixon agreed to discuss "peace for security," demanding the USSR's human rights record be on the agenda as well. The Soviet Union agreed, trusting its own strength would allow it to main-

tain control over its people. That decision led to the 1975 Helsinki Agreement, in which the Soviet Union acknowledged such human rights as family reunification and open borders. As we said in our statement, this agreement "opened the floodgates of dissent and led to [the USSR's] collapse."

The North Korean government may be a Stalinist dictatorship, but it is not as dangerous an adversary as was the Kremlin. I pray that the White House will make human rights a priority in dealing with North Korea. It is the right thing to do. And I pray that God will bless the people of North Korea with at least the degree of religious and civil freedom many in the Soviet empire eventually experienced. 

Kim Jong Il, whose official title is Chairman of the National Defense Commission, has ruled North Korea since 1994, when the country promised to stop trying to develop nuclear weapons and agreed to allow inspections to verify their compliance. But as 2002 ended, North Korean officials met with two U.N. weapons inspectors at Yongbyon, the site of North Korea's main nuclear complex. The inspectors watched North Korean officials cut dozens of seals from a 5-megawatt nuclear reactor, reopening it for the first time in nearly a decade, and cover over U.N. surveillance cameras in the plant. The next day, North Korean scientists began removing seals and surveillance cameras from a cooling pond where spent fuel rods had been lying untouched and reopened a nearby facility designed to extract plutonium, which can be used to fashion nuclear bombs, from the spent fuel. Weapons inspectors were then expelled from the country.

Time, January 13, 2003



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Parenting by the Book:

LOOKING TO SCRIPTURE FOR WISDOM
AND GUIDANCE IN PARENTING



BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

See page 8 for information on ordering *Parenting with Scripture*.

Kara Durbin recalls an occasion when her young nephew had lied. Her sister explained to her son that it was not right to lie,

not only because Mom said so but more importantly because God says so. Then, Durbin says, her sister gave her son a Scripture verse about honesty to

back up what she was saying.

That's when the green light came on and Durbin began her hunt for Bible verses that would be useful in her role as a parent.

In her daily quiet times, Durbin started writing down topics she dealt with as a parent and then searched the Scriptures for verses that related to the topics. Her list got longer and longer. She tried to find a topical Bible or reference book that already had all of this together, but her search uncovered nothing geared specifically toward parenting.

That was the genesis for her book, *Parenting with Scripture: A Topical Guide for Teachable Moments*, which stresses how important it is for parents to use Scripture to discipline, encourage, and comfort their children.

"In Matthew 7:24, Jesus says anyone who hears His words

and puts them into practice is like a wise man who builds his house on the rock. When the storms come, that house will stand firm because of its solid foundation. I tell parents that every time they use Scripture or biblical principles in discipline situations and teachable moments, they are helping lay that solid scriptural foundation for their children so that when the inevitable storms of life come, their children will be better-equipped to stand firm," says Durbin.

"When I was teaching fourth grade several years ago, I was reading a novel with the children. One of the characters in the book stole something, and I asked the class if it was wrong or okay for this character to steal.

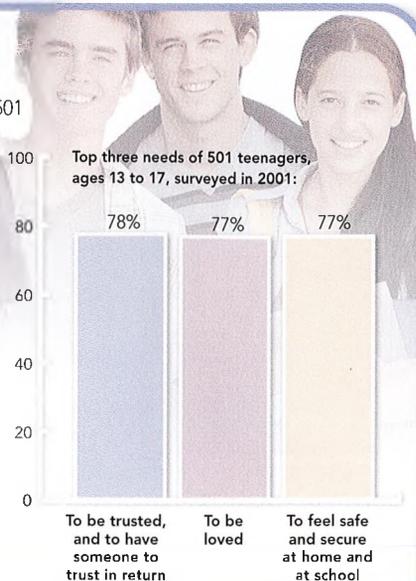
"To my amazement the children said yes, giving excuses that because of this or that circum-

A TEEN'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

In 2001, the Gallup Youth Survey asked 501 13- to 17-year-olds what they considered to be very strong needs in their lives. They went straight to the emotional requirements, and the "need to be trusted" topped the list.

George H. Gallup Jr. commented about the study that "adults [should] listen anew to the cries of today's teens... with a sense of urgency, for, as one social observer has noted, teens make up one-fifth of the population but one hundred percent of the future."

Data: Gallup Poll Tuesday Briefing, July 23, 2002



stance stealing was acceptable. I suddenly realized that these children had already been captured by the secular thought that if you can justify something as right, that makes it right," she says.

"As Christians, we know what the Bible has to say about stealing, lying, and many other undesirable behaviors. But as much as I prompted those fourth graders, I could not get one of them to raise their hand and admit that stealing is wrong," she confesses.

"With my own children, I want to be very deliberate about teaching them what the Bible has to say about basic issues of morality because our culture will encourage them to justify any behavior or thought as normal," Durbin continues.

When parents turn to God's Word for instruction, children begin to see that there is one absolute moral authority, despite what the world is preaching, she says. "People are turning to all sorts of things for solutions to their problems. The younger a person is when she understands that God has the way to help us in every situation the better. When a child learns to search God's Word and know God's Word and hide it in his heart, he is laying a foundation for godly living," Durbin says.

It's all about instilling a biblical worldview in your children, she says. "It goes to the basics of turning to Scripture for every question and problem and joy in life," Durbin remarked. "A lot

of people view religion as a Sunday morning event, something that doesn't really affect their daily life. That's not true."

Durbin encourages parents to look for "teachable moments," such as when the family is gathered around the television and everyone sees or hears something objectionable or thought provoking. "Ask your children what God has to say about that," she says. "You might not know a verse right off the top of your head, but you can discuss the issue the program raised immediately and introduce the particular verse later."

There is no question that Scripture should be brought into all areas of life, she continues, reciting Deuteronomy 6:6-7: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." The more parents do that, the better prepared their children will be to face the world with a Christian worldview, Durbin says.

"When you use Scripture to instruct and encourage your children, you are building in them a high view of Scripture," she continues, noting children will see your reliance on God's Word and begin to naturally understand the Bible has a message for every day of our lives.

"Some of us think of the Bible as a big, boring rule

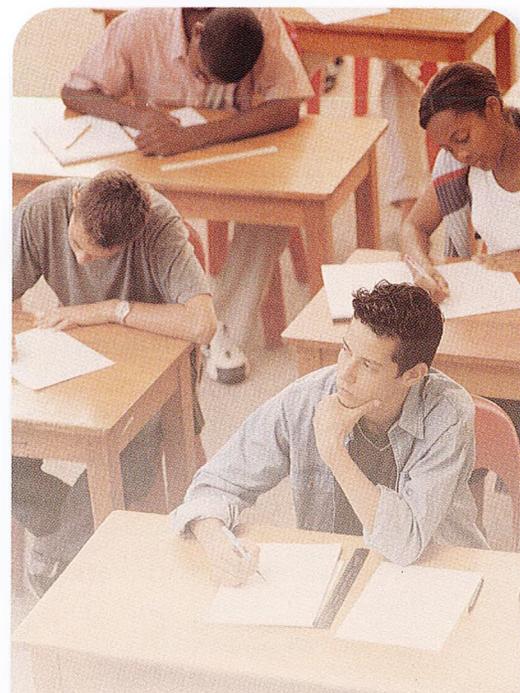
book that takes the joy out of life. But God created us, and He knows what is best for us. If we obey God's Word, our lives are so much more rewarding," she says.

Durbin underscores how important it is for parents to teach their children to actually pick up and read the Bible itself. "I would much rather have the children look up the verse than have a parent sitting there with my book open on her lap. I don't want children to believe this wisdom is coming from a lady named Kara Durbin who wrote a book. It is not; it is coming straight from God. Use a book like *Parenting with Scripture* as a reference, but always try to have the Bible out and let your children look up the verse. That helps them become familiar with the Bible."

Parents who themselves didn't have a solid Christian upbringing will be as blessed as their children when they begin to base their parenting upon the Bible, she adds.

"We don't outgrow learning and going to God for help with all the issues we face in life, such as money, integrity, anger, and procrastination. My favorite topic in my book is worry," Durbin admits. "I continue to deal with that myself.

"It is a great thing when children see their moms, dads, and grandparents all benefiting from God's instruction and wisdom," she continues. "We never outgrow God's Word." ❖



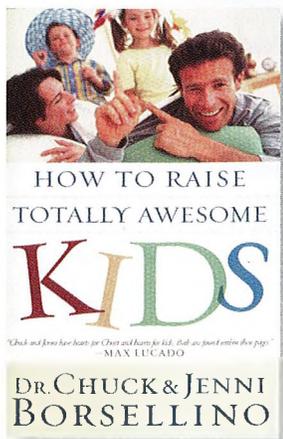
TEENS VALUE MORALITY, BUT 44% ADMIT TO CHEATING ON TESTS

A 2001 Gallup Youth Survey on teen morality asked for teens' feelings about honesty, cheating, lying, and respect for others. The results suggest that the current generation of teens recognizes and admires positive character qualities, both personal and social.

Teens have definite ideas about what constitutes good character. While **43%** put "honesty" at the top of the list, a substantial number of teens are willing to cut moral corners. **73%** say "I sometimes tell lies if I have to," and **44%** admit to cheating on tests. Students are even more likely to cheat as they age. **37%** of 13- to 15-year-olds have cheated, compared to **53%** of 16- and 17-year-olds. Although that is a sizable number, this figure represents a decline of more than **22%** points since 1981, when **66%** of teens admitted to cheating on tests.

When presented with a list of morally challenging situations, **92%** of teens said they would feel guilty about neglecting their parents in their old age. "Lying to a friend" and "cheating on a test in school" would each be a source of guilt for about **80%** of teens. Premarital sex turned up last on the list, with **66%** of girls and **53%** of boys saying they would feel guilty about it.

"Teens Value Morality, But Will Bend Rules," The Gallup Organization, February 5, 2002



PRINCIPLES FOR RAISING AWESOME KIDS

With wit and wisdom, Chuck and Jenni Borsellino share ten essential principles that will help moms and dads when your patience is failing and your blood pressure is rising. Whether you're a parent in a traditional family, a stepfamily, or a single-parent family, you're just ten steps away from discovering how good parents become great parents and average kids become awesome kids.

(Multnomah)

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Money Management and Godly Character

BY J. RAYMOND ALBREKTSON

In light of the recent and painful financial collapse of several very large corporations, it's timely to consider whose resources we are investing, spending, or hoarding. With an acknowledgment that it is God's money we are managing comes a deeper appreciation and commitment to do the right thing—both in our budgets at home and in the accounting books of the largest multinational corporations. — EDITOR

Winning at the Game of Life

Not long ago a friend of mine returned from a scuba-diving trip to the Micronesian island of Yap. After getting a full report on the fabulous diving he'd done there, I joked, "And did you bring me anything for my coin collection?" He laughed, recognizing that the traditional currency of the Yapese islanders consists of huge, mostly immobile stones—some as large as truck tires. On the island of Yap, when they say "you can't take it with you," it's true of this life as well as the next.

Wealth—even the kind that fits into a wallet—is like that. We didn't bring it into the world, even if we were born into a

wealthy family. We certainly can't take it out of this world. So the question is this: While we're here, what do we do with our money? And how can we teach our children to use it wisely?

If you've been financially blessed, you face the challenge of raising unspoiled children who won't take their unearned wealth for granted. If you're struggling financially or coping with the consequences of past financial mistakes, you want to help your children make better decisions than you did. In either case, how can you begin to lay a foundation that will carry your children confidently into an uncertain future?

In one of Jesus' most misunderstood parables, a rascally manager embezzled from his master's wealth in order to gain the friendship of his master's debtors (Luke 16:1-13). The manager gave away what he couldn't possibly keep (and, in fact, didn't even own) in order to gain something he could not lose—the gratitude and friendship of those whose debts he reduced. In telling that story Jesus emphasized that wealth is temporary, something very much like the play money in the game of Monopoly. The steward knew he was playing with someone else's cash, so he used it shrewdly while he still had access to it.

The financial assets you own are just like Monopoly money.

Those bits of pink and yellow paper only have value while you're playing the game. You can buy railroads and real estate, pay

your taxes and rent, and even bail yourself out of jail. But as soon as the game is over, the Monopoly money is nothing more than colorful pieces of paper.

Wouldn't it be great if we could somehow transform that great pile of Monopoly money into wealth that lasts beyond the game? That's exactly the opportunity that stands before us. By teaching our kids to appropriately value and manage the money that comes their way, we can build something of lasting value—our children's character. In that respect they'll be way ahead of the scoundrel in Jesus' parable, but they'll also acquire his wisdom in spending money that is temporarily available to them in order to achieve permanent results.

The True Value of Money

When children play Monopoly, they learn how play money mimics the use of real money. Likewise, when children play with real money, they learn how earthly wealth imitates the use of spiritual wealth. If we allow our kids to grow up believing that everyday wealth (property, assets, material possessions) is of ultimate value, we've kept them from understanding the real significance of wealth. Our children need to understand that money is important because it can be used to achieve great good, especially in God's kingdom.

As we teach our kids that money is not the ultimate goal, we can use money as a tool in

chiseling a lasting outline onto the somewhat blank slates that younger children represent. If we succeed, they will view money with more of an eternal perspective, putting long-range needs ahead of short-term gratification.

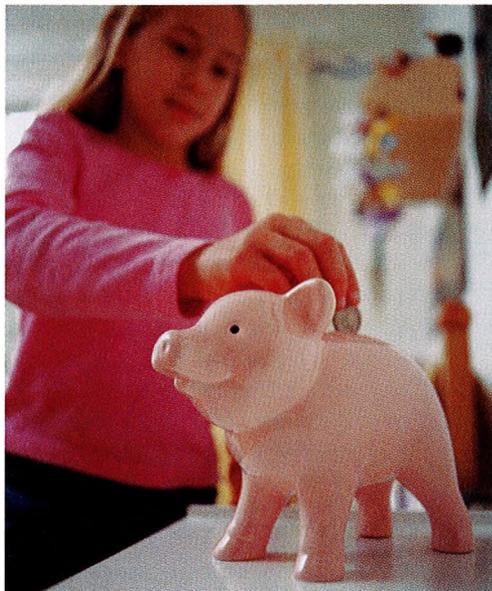
Character is what it takes to do the right thing even when there are powerful temptations to do something else. This is true with money management and with all of life. The same kids who are making decisions on expensive designer clothing and flashy cars may also be experiencing strong urges to experiment with sex. Character is what helps a teenager draw appropriate boundaries.

Of course, opportunities to take the wrong road don't end with the teenage years. Later in life every young man and woman will be pressured to take a short cut to "the good life" through unwise borrowing or unethical means such as cheating on taxes. Again, character helps a person make the right choices.

Taking the Long View

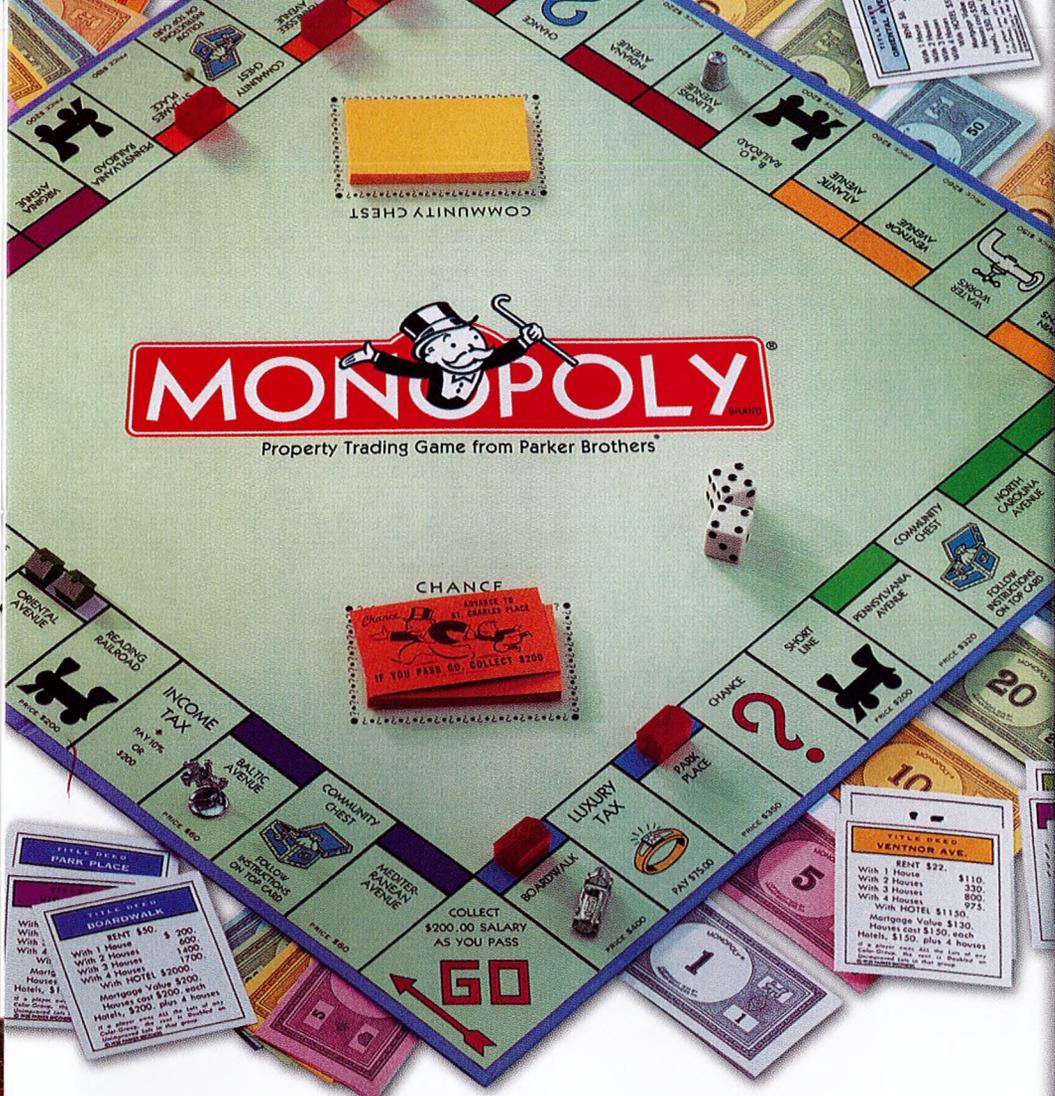
When it comes to money management, character means putting off short-term pleasure in favor of achieving a far more important long-term goal. In other words, financial character is grounded in the concept of deferred gratification. The choices we make today either help us reach our long-term goals or make it next to impossible. And those outward choices are indicators of inner character.

J. Raymond Albrektson is on the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ and the faculty of the U.S. branch of the International School of Theology near Rancho Cucamonga, California. His two adult children were taught the principles of generous giving, wise saving, and careful spending. The Albrektsons live in Redlands, California.



Instilling godly character in children involves teaching them to put off short-term pleasure to achieve more important long-term goals.

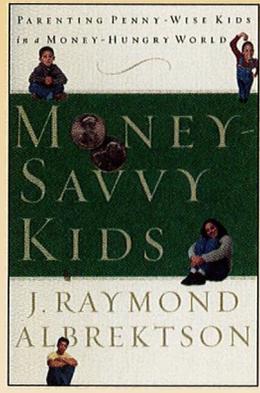




Prepare Your Child for Financial Success

Young children are captivated by Saturday morning television commercials pushing the next must-have toy. Older kids think they're losers if they don't keep up with the latest fashion trend.

Young adults face financial temptations—like the lure of credit cards—that seem too good to resist. Behind all these sales pitches lies the dangerous promise: “You can have it all—just buy now and pay later.”



Parents must meet these seductive, anti-biblical messages head-on by training children from a young age to develop biblical, money-savvy habits.

Money-Savvy Kids provides a workable strategy you can use—no matter what your financial history—to prepare your child for financial success today that will carry over into financial security for a lifetime. (WaterBrook)

Interested in this resource?
Visit us on-line at:



The article was excerpted with permission from *Money-Savvy Kids* (WaterBrook, 2002).

TEACH YOUR KIDS THAT A “GOOD DEED” ISN’T THE ONE TO BOARDWALK.

In the game of Monopoly, children learn how play money mimics the use of real money. But if we allow our kids to grow up believing that everyday wealth (property, assets, material possessions) is of ultimate value, we’ve kept them from understanding the real significance of wealth. Our children need to understand that money is important because it can be used to achieve great good, especially in God’s kingdom.

How do we use wise money management to teach godly character? A good starting point is to help our children see that money has value only in this life. In Monopoly, the bank gives every player a financial stake. We need to help our children understand that our wealth, whether inherited or earned, was given to us by our heavenly Father.

Our children need to understand that money is ours to use, not to own. In Monopoly, the players don’t literally “own” the

houses, hotels, and railroads. Those objects are merely part of playing the game. Likewise in life, God owns everything, and he lends his riches to us for our temporary use. The apostle Paul emphasized this when writing his young disciple, Timothy, urging him to “command those who are rich in this present world not to . . . put their hope in wealth . . . but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment” (1 Timothy 6:17).

That’s a good thing, because

we can trust our loving Father to use his wealth to care for us. And since it’s God’s money and not ours, we can rest in the knowledge that financial failure is not the ultimate catastrophe.

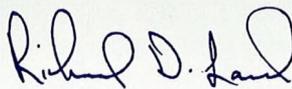
As we help our children learn to use money wisely, they’ll make mistakes. But to teach wise financial management, we have to allow our kids to truly handle the money. You don’t go very far in a game of Monopoly without actually handling the deeds, the little houses and hotels, and the rental fees. Children should be introduced to money appropriately at every stage in their lives. They need to grow accustomed to making their own financial decisions. Not all of those choices will prove to be wise ones, of course. And while it hurts us to see our children make blunders, it’s an essential part of the learning process. If we do our jobs carefully, we can limit the damage and scope of some of those goofs, or at least make the learning experience worth the price of the lesson. **1**

A spiritual legacy is a priceless gift.

Parenting in the twenty-first century offers challenges that generations before us have not faced. While times certainly change, the basic needs of humanity do not; children desperately need the spiritual and moral advice and guidance God expects parents to provide. Indeed, after your responsibility to God and to your spouse, rearing your children is the most important responsibility you have.

There's no greater gift parents of any generation can give their children than to rear them in a spiritually nurturing home. The children reared in those homes will indeed rise up and call their parents blessed.

The ERLC is committed to providing Bible-based resources to help parents fulfill the mandate to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.



Richard D. Land, ERLC President

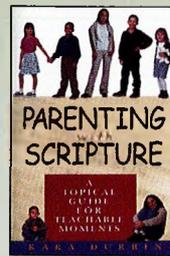
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Parenting with Scripture

For parents who want to teach their children to turn early and often to God's Word, Kara Durbin offers a helpful resource. Through simple discussions, Scripture memorization, and activities that are adaptable to your children's ages and interests, you will be able to weave God's principles into your family's daily lives. This "topical guide for teachable moments" covers issues such as anger, complaining, discipline, sharing, attitude, jealousy, and more.

BKPWS (251 pages)

\$12.99 ea.



Faith & Family

The ERLC publication *Faith & Family* (formerly *LifeLight*) is a colorful, four-page handout for ministerial staff and lay leaders to use as they address critical issues that affect our faith and our families. This Parenting by the Book edition is based on Psalm 119:98 ("Your commands make me wiser") and focuses on showing parents how to turn to the Word of God for help with parenting questions big and small. For *Culture Response Kit* subscribers, 100 are included in the kit.

PABULK03 (4 pages)

\$4.95/50



FOR TEENS

Sticking Up for What Is Right: Answers to the Moral Dilemmas Teenagers Face

"Do the right thing."

Your teenagers need to know that it's more than a catchy slogan—it's a guideline that will transform their lives. "What is the right thing?" they ask. This book will help answer tough questions such as: With sex, how far is too far? How honest should I be? Aren't right and wrong up to the individual? Cameron Mitchell Diaz guides teens to do the right thing and feel good about it.

BKSTI (159 pages)

\$10.00 ea.



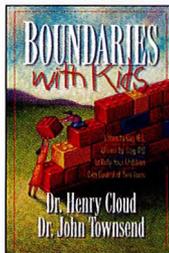
Boundaries with Kids

To help their children grow into healthy adults, parents need to teach them how to take responsibility for their behavior, their values, and their lives.

Henry Cloud and John Townsend bring Bible-based principles to bear on the challenging task of child rearing, showing parents how to bring control to an out-of-control family life, how to set limits and still be loving parents, how to define legitimate boundaries for the family, and how to instill godly character in children.

BKBOU (224 pages)

\$12.99 ea.

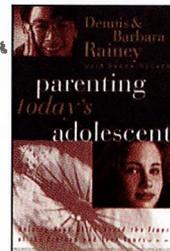


Parenting Today's Adolescent

Today's adolescents need parents who understand the challenges they face in the world. Dennis and Barbara Rainey address issues such as peer pressure, clothes, dating, music and movie choices, jobs, spiritual growth, alcohol, drugs, smoking, grades, and more.

BKPAR (361 pages)

\$15.99 ea. (20% off retail)

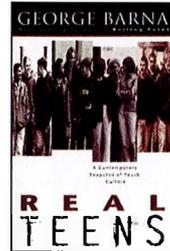


Real Teens: A Contemporary Snapshot of Youth Culture

They are the digital generation—the Mosaics (born 1984-2002)—connected and upbeat young people who are anxious to make a difference in the world. How can we effectively convey the eternal truths of the Gospel to high-tech, information-drenched, highly mobile youth, who believe themselves to be self-sufficient? George Barna points the way.

BKREA (168 pages)

\$12.99 ea.

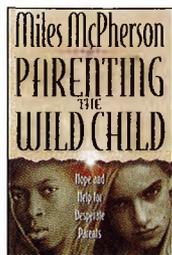


Parenting the Wild Child: Hope and Help for Desperate Parents

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Good Dads:

FAITH MAKES A DIFFERENCE

BY CHARLOTTE CRYSTAL

Evangelical Christian and Catholic fathers spend a lot of one-on-one time with their children, making them the best dads studied by a University of Virginia sociologist and expert on religion and families.

"My research shows that evangelical Protestant and Catholic fathers are, on average, more involved with their children," said W. Bradford Wilcox, assistant professor of sociology at U.Va. "Evangelical Protestant fathers, including Southern Baptists, are very involved with their children, which some academics might find surprising, given their tendency to embrace traditional gender attitudes."

Previous research has shown that fathers are nearly as important as mothers in guiding children through the challenges of childhood and adolescence. But what makes some fathers more likely than others to focus on their children? Supporters of evangelical Christian denominations often argue that a father's faith can motivate a dad to be there for his kids. Wilcox's research suggests they may be right.

Wilcox studied fathers who lived with their children (ages 5-18), and who participated in the National Survey of Families and Households in 1987-88 and 1992-94.

DOES RELIGION AFFECT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

A study by W. Bradford Wilcox shows that evangelical Christian dads rank high in one-on-one interaction with their kids, sharing mealtime with their families, and participation in youth-related activities.

Wilcox's analysis of that data resulted in his study, "Religion, Convention, and Paternal Involvement," which appears in the August 2002 issue of *Journal of Marriage and Family*.

Wilcox focused on three measures of paternal involvement. The first was one-on-one interaction. The fathers reported leisure time spent with the child, working on a project or playing with the child, private talks, and help with reading or homework. The second was family dinners. Fathers were asked how many evenings a week the whole family had dinner together. Finally, the dads reported on their participation in youth-related activities. They were asked how many hours in the average week they participated as an advisor, coach or leader of school activities, community youth groups, sports activities, or religious youth groups.

Fathers then were divided into four groups. The evangelical Protestant fathers were from Southern Baptist, Assembly of God, Pentecostal, Missionary Alliance, Christian Reformed, and a

number of other fundamentalist and evangelical churches. The mainline Protestant fathers were from Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Congregational churches. The final two groups were Catholic dads and fathers who identified themselves as unaffiliated with a particular church.

So how did these dads measure up?

The results put evangelical Christian dads at the top or near the top in each area. The measure of one-on-one interaction showed that evangelical dads were more involved than unaffiliated dads and mainline Protestant dads. Catholic dads fell somewhere in between.

A count of family dinners showed evangelical Protestant dads, in the average year, had roughly 27 more dinners with their families than unaffiliated fathers. Catholic and mainline Protestant fathers fell between evangelical Protestant and unaffiliated fathers.

Both evangelical Protestant and Catholic dads were more involved in youth activities than unaffiliated dads, with Catholic dads coming out on top. "Evangelical Protestant and Catholic churches may sponsor more youth-related activities than other churches, providing a broader range of activities for fathers and children to share,"

Wilcox suggested.

Sally Gallagher, associate professor of sociology at Oregon State University, observed, "Wilcox's analysis demonstrates that religious culture or subculture matters; that the content of religious belief and practice does indeed make a difference in men's involvement as parents." ❧



10 WAYS TO BE A Better Dad

TIPS FROM THE NATIONAL FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE

1 Respect Your Children's Mother

One of the best things a father can do for his children is to respect their mother. If you are married, keep your marriage strong and vital. If you're not married, it is still important to respect and support the mother of your children. A father and mother who respect each other, and let their children know it, provide a secure environment



for them. When children see their parents respecting each other, they are more likely to feel that they are also accepted and respected.

2 Spend Time with Your Children

How a father spends his time tells his children what's important to him. If you always seem too busy for your children, they will feel neglected no matter what you say. Treasuring children often means sacrificing other things, but it is essential to spend time with your children. Kids grow up so quickly. Missed opportunities are forever lost.



3 Earn the Right to Be Heard

All too often the only time a father speaks to his children is when they have done something wrong. That's why so many children cringe when their mother says, "Your father wants to talk with you." Begin talking with your kids when they are very young so that difficult subjects will be easier to handle as they get older. Take time and listen to their ideas and problems.



4 Discipline with Love

All children need guidance and discipline, not as punishment, but to set reasonable limits. Remind your children of the consequences of their actions and provide meaningful rewards for desirable behavior. Fathers who discipline in a calm and fair manner show love for their children.



5 Be a Role Model

Fathers are role models to their kids whether they realize it or not. A girl who spends time with a loving father grows up knowing she deserves to be treated with respect by boys, and what to look for in a husband. Fathers can teach sons what is important in life by demonstrating honesty, humility, and responsibility. "All the world's a stage..." and a father plays one of the most vital roles.



6 Be a Teacher

Too many fathers think teaching is something others do. But a father who teaches his children about right and wrong, and encourages them to do their best, will see his children make good choices. Involved fathers use everyday examples to help their children learn the basic lessons of life.



7 Eat Together as a Family

Sharing a meal together (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) can be an important part of healthy family life. It provides some structure in a busy day and gives kids the chance to talk about what they are doing and want to do. It is also a good time for fathers to listen and give advice. Most importantly, it is a time for families to be together each day.



8 Read to Your Children

In a world where television often dominates the lives of children, it is important that fathers make the effort to read to their children. Children learn best by doing and reading, as well as seeing and hearing. Begin reading to

your children when they are very young. When they are older encourage them to read on their own. Instilling your children with a love for reading is one of the best ways to ensure they will have a lifetime of personal and career growth.

9 Show Affection

Children need the security that comes from knowing they are wanted, accepted, and loved by their family. Parents, especially fathers, need to feel both comfortable and willing to hug their children. Showing affection every day is the best way to let your children know that you love them.



10 Realize that a Father's Job Is Never Done

Even after children are grown and ready to leave home, they will still look to their fathers for wisdom and advice. Whether it's continued schooling, a new job, or a wedding, fathers continue to play an essential part in the lives of their children as they grow and, perhaps, marry and build their own families.



For information about ordering the "10 Ways to Be a Better Dad" brochure, call the National Fatherhood Initiative at 301-948-0599 or visit the NFI Bookstore at www.fatherhood.org/catalog.asp.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HUMAN CLONING

BY TOM STRODE



The mere mention of cloning a human being is repulsive to many Americans, eliciting what has been labeled the “yuck factor.”

The idea produces visions of horribly deformed babies who die or, in some cases, do not. (Indeed, it required more than 270 attempts, including the deaths of several defective clones, before the sheep Dolly was born as the first successfully cloned mammal.) Those nightmarish thoughts are enough to convince even some people without any pretense of a biblical worldview that cloning is wrong.

There is, however, a deeper issue than the safety of the clones, as significant as that is.

“Cloning turns children into objects of manufacture rather than gifts from God,” says bioethicist C. Ben Mitchell. “Children are made in the image of God and have an inalienable right to an open future under God. We have a responsibility to protect children from being used as a means to someone else’s end.”

Some scientists are seeking to use children for their own purposes, however. Clonaid—the offshoot of the Raelians, a UFO cult—made the inaugural claim to the birth of a cloned baby, but other maverick researchers also have been working on producing clones.

Meanwhile, so-called mainstream scientists, though rejecting efforts that would result in the birth of a clone, still have been seeking to create clones for their purposes—in this case, research into possible cures for various diseases. These researchers are unwilling to bring clones to term, but they are willing to destroy them as young embryos in order to obtain stem cells for experimentation.

Regardless of the eventual goal, cloning normally has the same

genesis. As outlined by the staff of the President’s Council on Bioethics, the steps of what is known as nuclear transfer include:

- Removal of the nuclear DNA from an egg cell,
- Insertion of the nucleus of an adult cell into the enucleated egg, and
- Activation of the reconstructed egg with an electric current or chemicals to cause it to begin cell division.

If reproductive cloning is the goal, transfer of the embryo to a woman’s uterus is attempted when the activated egg reaches a satisfactory stage of development.

Whether the objective is the birth of a baby or the production of cells for research, cloning has taken place. That is one of the arguments used to urge Congress to adopt a comprehensive ban on human cloning, one that would prohibit the process whether for reproduction or research.

While other proposals allow research cloning, legislation by Representatives Dave Weldon, R.-Fla., and Bart Stupak, D.-Mich., in the House of Representatives and Senators Sam Brownback, R.-Kan., and Mary Landrieu, D.-La., in the Senate would bar all cloning.

Their bills “are still the only sensible answers to the problem,” says Mitchell, a consultant to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and an associate professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in suburban Chicago. “No cloned human embryos should be made for any reason, and neither of these bills restricts ethically responsible scientific research in any way.

“The United States should set the example for the world. Then we can work for an international ban.”¹⁰

"Cloning turns children into objects of manufacture rather than gifts from God. Children are made in the image of God and have an inalienable right to an open future under God. We have a responsibility to protect children from being used as a means to someone else's end."

— BIOETHICIST C. BEN MITCHELL

Who are the Raelians?

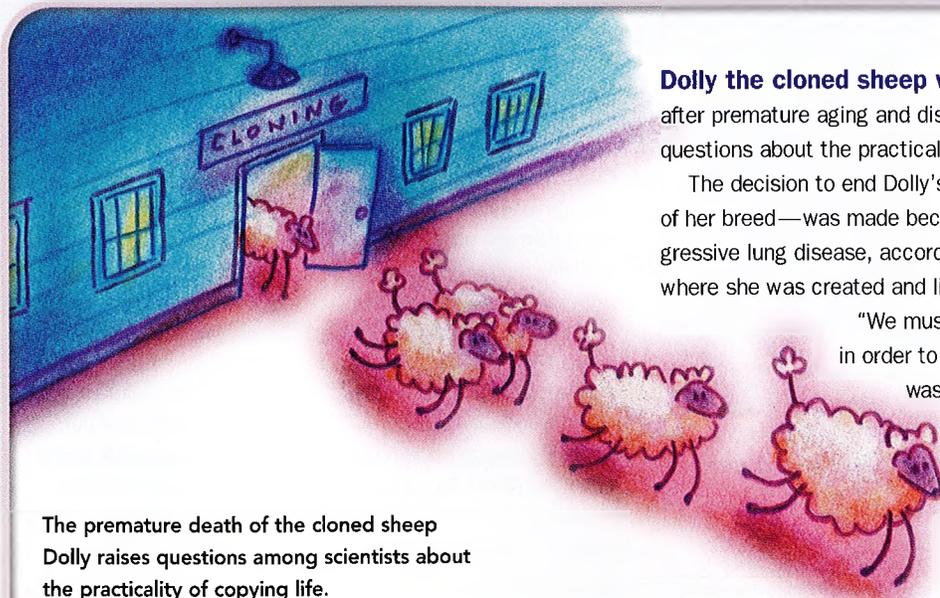
For the Raelians, human cloning means eternal life. This UFO-based cult teaches that human life on earth began through cloning and that its hope of continuing eternally rests with cloning. Therefore, Rael, leader of the Raelians, established Clonaid in 1997 as a company designed to produce the first clone. Although the group claimed in December 2002 to have produced the first born human clone, that has not been verified. Clonaid eventually intends to clone an adult human being absent the growth process. Upon the creation of a youthful copy, the personality and memories of the original human being will be transferred into his clone. "Then, we will wake up after death in a brand new body just like after a good night sleep," Rael says on Clonaid's Web site. The Raelians' hope is to repeat this process each time a clone ages and is in need of a new body.

Rael's goal of obtaining eternal life through cloning began in 1973. Then known as Claude Vorilhon, a

French journalist, he claims to have encountered a flying saucer. Its inhabitant—a four-foot-tall, olive-skinned, man-like being with long hair—revealed to him the real origin of life, Rael says. The revelation was:

- The Hebrew word Elohim—translated "God" in the Old Testament, notably in Genesis 1—should instead have been translated "those who came from the sky."
- These Elohim, or extra-terrestrials, not a sovereign God, created the first human beings using DNA.
- Through the centuries, these extra-terrestrials maintained contact with human beings via specially chosen prophets, such as Jesus, Moses, Buddha, and Mohammed.
- An embassy is to be built in Israel to welcome the extra-terrestrials when they come.

The Raelian movement teaches there is no such thing as a soul. Raelians have no problem with abortion, divorce, or a variety of sexual behaviors.



The premature death of the cloned sheep Dolly raises questions among scientists about the practicality of copying life.

Dolly the cloned sheep was put to death Friday [Feb. 14, 2003], after premature aging and disease marred her short existence and raised questions about the practicality of copying life.

The decision to end Dolly's life at age 6—about half the life expectancy of her breed—was made because a veterinarian confirmed she had a progressive lung disease, according to the Roslin Institute, the Scottish lab where she was created and lived.

"We must await the results of the post-mortem on Dolly in order to assess whether her relatively premature death was in any way connected with the fact that she was a clone," said Richard Gardner, a professor of zoology at Oxford University and chair of the Royal Society working group on stem cell research and therapeutic cloning.

Associated Press, February 14, 2003

Would a clone have a soul?

AN EVANGELICAL BIOETHICIST TALKS ABOUT CLONING

C. Ben Mitchell, Ph.D., is associate professor of bioethics and contemporary culture at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, co-director of the biotechnology project and fellow of the Council of Biotechnology Policy for the Wilberforce Forum, senior fellow of the Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity, and editor of Ethics & Medicine: An International Journal of Bioethics. To read Dr. Mitchell's writings on cloning and other bioethics issues, visit the Web site of the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity at www.cbhd.org.

Light: Would a cloned human being be a person? In other words, would a clone have a soul?

CBM: Actually, we should reframe the question to be: Is a human clone a soul? When God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, he became a living soul. All of Adam's progeny are likewise living souls. So, we do not have souls, we are souls. Thus, we have every reason to believe that a cloned human being would be a soul. First, a cloned cow is still a cow, and a cloned sheep is still a sheep. Cloning does not change a being's species. Similarly, a cloned human being would be a member of our species, *Homo sapiens*.

She would have all the genetic material that any other human being has. To be human is to be an ensouled person, and to be an ensouled person is to be a human being. A cloned human being would still be an imager of God. That's why we worry about the risks to cloned human embryos. Even the earliest human embryo is an imager of God, and we should not endanger her life in research. Second, it would be very dangerous to assume that cloned humans were not ensouled imagers of God. If they are not full-fledged persons, that would justify using them like lab rats for research. But because cloned humans would be imagers of God, we should respect them and protect their lives as we would any other human being.

Light: Would a human clone be identical to the person whose genetic material he received?

CBM: A clone would be genetically identical, or nearly so. But this in no way means that a clone would be an exact copy of the original. "Identical" twins are genetically identical, yet they often have very different personalities and may have different appearances. In the case of "Copy Cat," the cloned feline, the clone did not have the same coat pattern as the original cat—even though the clone had the very same genetic material. Also, we have very little understanding of how much of a role environment plays in who we are and how we look. Uterine environment, for instance, may make a larger difference than we currently understand.

Light: Legally, would a clone be regarded as property rather than as a person?

CBM: The law currently regards an embryo as a piece of property rather than as a person. Cases involving the "custody" of frozen embryos, for instance, have been almost exclusively decided using property law instead of child custody law. Once born, a human clone presumably would be treated the way any other child would be treated. But all this could be tested in the courts. As long as the law remains untested, everything is up for grabs. This potentially puts cloned children at great risk.

Light: Are you saying the law should protect human clones?

CBM: Exactly. We should protect human embryos from being the subjects of destructive research and from being manufactured like automobiles. Also, any human clones that might be born in the United States in the future should have the same protections under the Constitution as any other person. As children, they should be protected from abusive scientific research. Those born outside the U.S. should be protected under international human rights laws.

Light: Most of the arguments against human cloning have focused on safety. If it were safe, would it be okay?

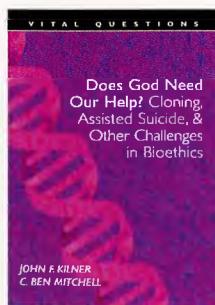
CBM: Absolutely not. And we would do well not to limit our arguments against cloning to safety. Right now, safety is one issue. We should not put human embryonic life at risk. Remember, embryos are people too—very young people, but people nonetheless. But what if one day cloning were as safe as normal procreation? Would that make it right to clone a human being? Of course not. Children should not be the products of our design. They are made in the image of God and have an inalienable right to an open future under God. Cloning turns children into manufactured objects rather than gifts from God. ☉

Does God Need Our Help?

Cloning. Assisted Suicide. Stem Cell Research. The advance of biotechnology is breathtaking. Do we know where it is leading us? What does the Bible say about limits on science and medicine?

How can we think and act in a world rampant with issues such as these that often confuse, divide, and challenge us? Does a person of faith turn away from these issues, hoping they will go away? Or does one investigate key questions and learn how to discuss and confront issues with a "Christian mind"?

John F. Kilner and C. Ben Mitchell will lead you on a fascinating journey, explaining the cutting-edge advances in biotechnology and where they are leading our society. This book will help you formulate an informed and thoroughly Christian perspective on everything from assisted suicide to infertility treatments, from cloning to stem cell research. (Tyndale)



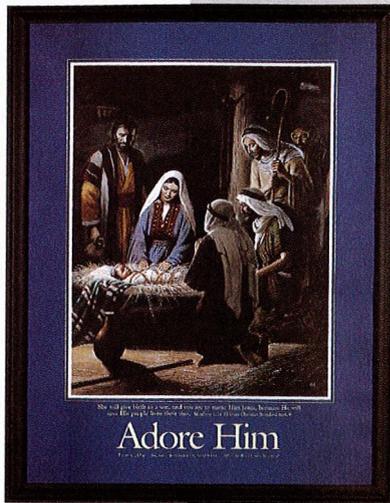
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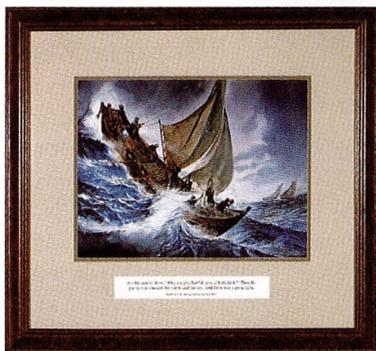
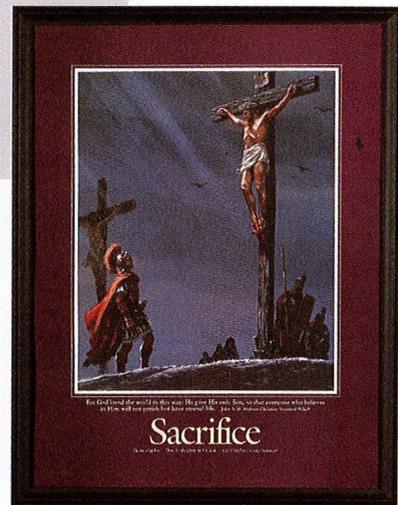
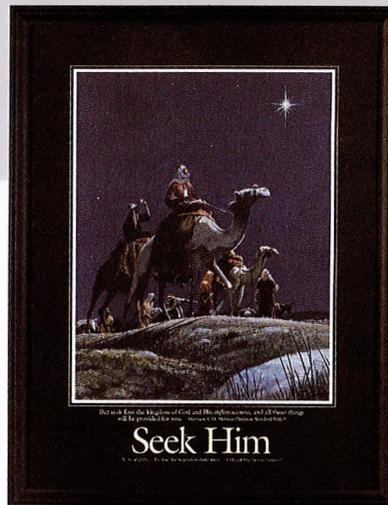
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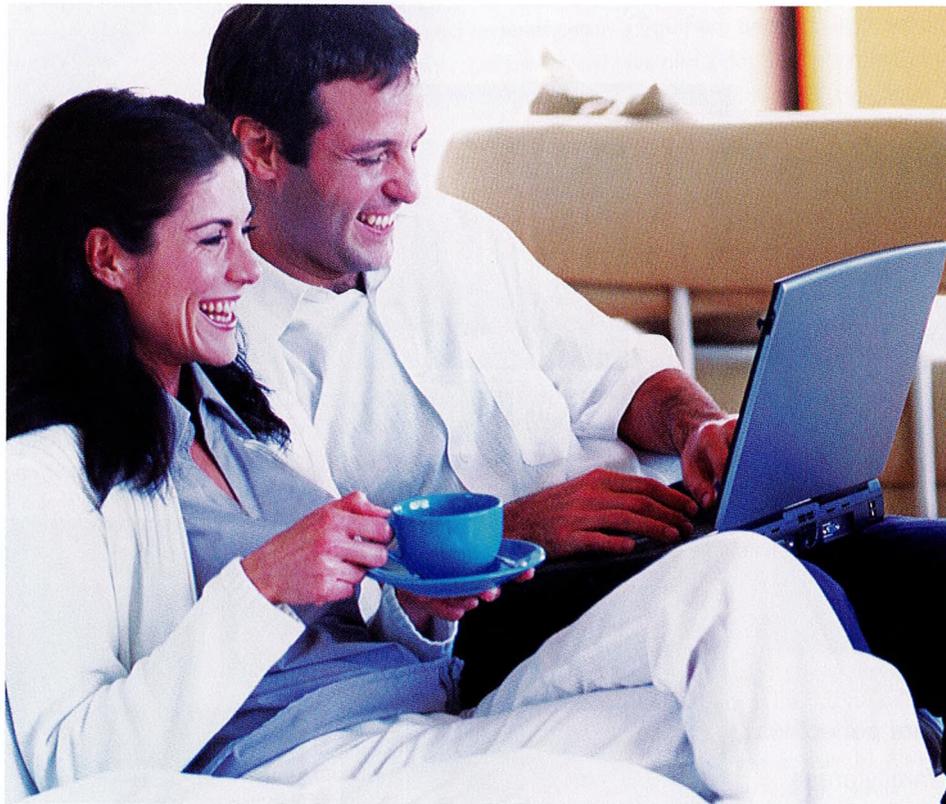
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Your Marriage as

BY THOMAS WHITEMAN AND RANDY PETERSEN



In a culture that is addicted to entertainment, it's no surprise that many people enjoy surfing the Web. But if you find that your time on the 'net is keeping you from spending precious time with your spouse or children, or you find yourself keeping secrets from them regarding your on-line activities, you need to reevaluate.

Craving the Entertainment

As a culture, we are addicted to entertainment. Writer Neil Postman made the point brilliantly in his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. The worst thing for us is to be bored. We constantly seek sensory stimulation. In fact a new generation has grown up adept at multi-tasking. We used to blame *Sesame Street* and MTV for the rapid succession of images that shrank the previous generation's attention span. But now you'll see a kid watching TV while listening to a Walkman, playing a

Game Boy, and talking on a cell phone. And somehow never missing a beat.

This is the world in which you're trying to salvage a marriage. If you or your spouse is dealing with an Internet addiction of some sort, it's not all that surprising. In this world we are trained to be entertainment addicts. . . . So is it any wonder when this incredible machine—the computer—pushes us over the edge?

Why are we saying this? Because many treat Internet addiction as a rare disease.

People are ashamed to confess when they have a problem with it, and spouses are hesitant to admit that they're married to someone who does. Of course denial is a major component of any continuing addiction, and denial is often held in place by guilt.

But the fact is that Internet addiction is not rare at all. In a world that celebrates "entertainment addiction" in general, it's certainly understandable that some would let their fascination with the vast resources of the net get out of control. While we can

understand it, we don't excuse it. Certainly this fascination has led some to do shameful things—neglecting family, carrying on affairs, or indulging in pornographic perversity—but at least we can see how they got to that point. Shameful deeds bring feelings of shame, and they should. But we can let those guilty feelings motivate us to confess, get help, and undo the damage.

Meanwhile spouses should understand that we're dealing with a sickness of our entire culture. Your addicted spouse is merely going with the flow. Going too far with that flow, no doubt, but you do need to recognize that our world is rife with temptation. To find renewed health for your marriage, you're going to need to go against the flow. Together, you'll need to challenge the entertainment addiction that everyone else takes for granted.

The Addiction Machine

If you were trying to create a machine that would make people addicted to it, how would you design it? Well, it would need to dispense something that people need or at least that they think they need, like social status, escape, peace of mind, or—how about this?—entertainment. You would need to create instant gratification so that the user merely has to push a button and the benefits are provided. You would need to offer small doses, but promise huge satisfaction, and try to make it so that the user has to use it more and more to achieve the desired effect. And of course it would be extremely helpful if the addictive machine could be used in the privacy of one's own home, per-

Dr. Thomas Whiteman, founder and president of Life Counseling Services, and his coauthor, Randy Petersen, tackle the issues of pornography, escapism, and how to overcome Internet addiction in Your Marriage and the Internet (Revell, 2002). This article was excerpted with permission.

d the Internet

haps in a closed-off room, where no one would have to know the extent of a person's use.

Oops! Apparently that machine has already been invented.

It is a given that the anonymity, privacy, and easy access of the internet make it an ideal conduit for pornography and prurient chat. If our culture is addicted to entertainment—and by that term we mean the rapid onslaught of new sensory stimulation—then the Internet is the ultimate addiction machine.

Our culture is addicted to entertainment—new stimuli. We can easily be swept along with that tide. In fact, because of the available onslaught of excitement, we're tempted to think that our marriages aren't exciting enough. As a result we either try drastic (and usually doomed) methods to rekindle excitement in our marriage or allow our attention to drift away from our marital relationship into other, more exciting pursuits.

That's what we're dealing with. Internet addiction isn't just

a bad habit, like biting your nails. It's a cultural crisis. If it is troubling your marriage, you need to make fundamental changes in how you think about marriage and about entertainment. We have three suggestions for fighting back: Take a break from all the entertainment stimuli in which you normally indulge, work on enhancing your marriage, and learn how to tame the Internet. Your neighbors may think you're a little odd, but they're not the ones you're fighting for.

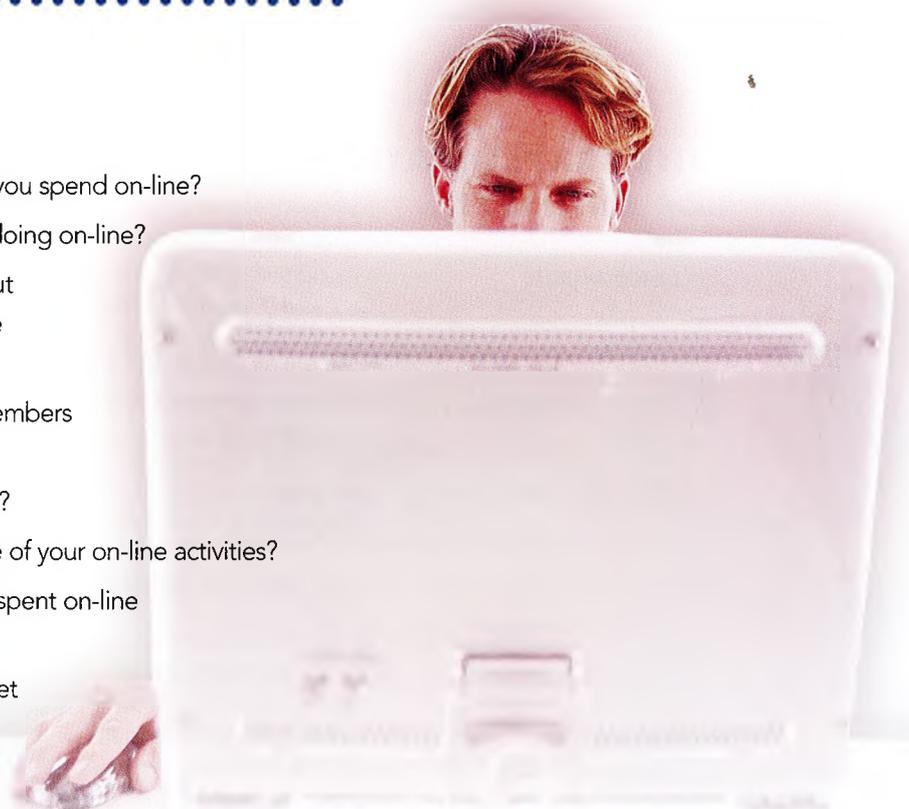
The purpose of the test below is to give you a sense of the danger signs. As with many addictions, people can ease into Internet dependency without realizing they're hooked. In drug terms, the Internet is more like Valium than heroin. It has a valid purpose that may disguise its addictive properties. So maybe this is a moment to look at your life or to urge your spouse to do that. What signs of Internet addiction are seen in your home?

If you answer yes to just a few of the questions, the Internet probably isn't much of a problem—yet. You can lose track of time (question 1) while bowling or bathing, so that in itself isn't a big deal. But if it becomes so common that it affects your marriage or your work (questions 6-7), then it's a problem. Virtually every family argues over computer use (question 4), but if you find yourself bullying your kids so that you can visit your chat room every night, you may need some help ①

Are You Addicted to the Internet?

Check your answers to the following questions:

- Do you typically lose track of the amount of time you spend on-line?
- Are you sneaking around or hiding what you are doing on-line?
- Do you find yourself obsessed with thoughts about how you can get on-line or when you will have the next opportunity to get on-line?
- Do you argue with your spouse or other family members about time on the Internet?
- Do you try to keep secret the sites you are visiting?
- Do you spend less time with your spouse because of your on-line activities?
- If you have Internet access at work, has your time spent on-line affected your job performance?
- When you go on vacation or are away from Internet access for a week or more, do you find yourself preoccupied with finding a way to get back on-line or get back home to your computer?
- Do you do or say things on-line that you would not want your spouse to know?
- Are you confiding in an on-line partner or saying things to him or her that you wouldn't say to your spouse?
- Do you find yourself becoming aroused while on-line?
- Do you seek sexual stimulation on-line?



For resources to strengthen your faith and family as you battle negative media influences in our permissive culture, visit us on-line at:

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THE SEXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

BY JUSTIN CARABELLO

Justin Carabello is Promotional Director for Pure Life Ministries, a ministry dedicated to helping men overcome sexual sin through holiness and a passionate pursuit of Jesus Christ. This article is adapted from one that first appeared in *Unchained!*, a monthly webzine devoted to bringing God's truth to the issues surrounding sexual sin. For more information on Pure Life Ministries, or to subscribe to *Unchained!*, visit: www.purelifeministries.org or call 800-635-1866.

Young teens—girls especially—are living in an increasingly sexually charged atmosphere. The music industry has systematically indoctrinated girls to become sensual and seductive in their thinking, dress, and behavior. Movies show teens experiencing the “thrills” of sex with no apparent side effects, teaching boys that they should expect to be the recipients of sexual favors from girls and girls that they should be willing to supply boys with sex.

Wise parents will set godly boundaries regarding the consumption of television, movies, music, and the Internet, explaining to their children why they should avoid the dictates of a permissive culture when it comes to dress and behavior.

There was a time when America's children were just that, children—young, impressionable, innocent. Childish dreams dominated their small world; blushing innocence accompanied talks about the birds and the bees. Unfortunately, those days are gone.

As a middle school teacher in the mid-1990s, I was forced to face the reality that young teens—girls especially—were living in an increasingly sexually charged atmosphere. Boys often joked about pornography, and girls dressed in increasingly provocative clothing. And that was several years ago.

There's a war raging for our young people's souls, and their sexuality is a major battlefield. If Satan conquers them there, he captures one of their strongest drives, one not easily brought back under subjection. What we're witnessing in our nation's youth is not a passing phase, nor a harmless rite of passage. Rather, it is a calculated effort to make them slaves to their sexual nature.

The Increasingly Bare Facts

Over the last fifty years, America has increasingly emphasized the sexuality of female youth. Girls are being encouraged to find their value in their bodies and make it the focal point of their expression.

The music industry has systematically indoctrinated girls to become sensual and seductive in their thinking, dress, and behavior. Madonna began the trend in the 1980s, Brittany Spears continued it in the 1990s, and a bevy of musical starlets vie for

position in the new millennium.

The fashion world is a contributing factor as designers compete to see how “sexy” their clothes for girls can be. Leading this immoral campaign are clothiers like the popular Abercrombie & Fitch, highly criticized in May 2002 for releasing a new line of thong underwear for little girls. Their Fall 2002 catalog was 119 pages of soft-core porn sold in shrink-wrapped packaging.

The message is clear: the rarer the clothes girls wear, the more people will notice them, the more popular they will be, and the more fun they will have.

Not only is our culture training preteen girls to dress to emphasize their sexuality, it also is encouraging them to think sexually. For instance, look at what popular television shows such as *Friends*, *Dawson's Creek*, *Boston Public*, and many others are feeding our children: a steady diet of promiscuous sex. The actors and actresses on these shows are role models for our youth. They are teaching our kids to associate free sexual expression with success, happiness, power, and love.

The same message comes across in the marketing world's blatantly sexual and youth-centric advertising. In commercials, print media, billboards, and beyond, the message is clear: Be sexy, it gets results.

“Surrendering our children to a godless culture is unthinkable.”

— JUSTIN CARABELLO

Budding Sex Addicts

In addition to all this, girls have to endure intense pressure from boys who have their own struggles. While today's teen boys have the same natural bent toward sex they've always had, the stimuli available to feed that urge has multiplied exponentially in recent years, largely due to the Internet. A recent study indicates that the average age for first-time exposure to pornography is eleven years old! Millions of boys across our nation enter adolescence with their minds already polluted and desensitized by raunchy Internet porn.

Hollywood dutifully marches on in its quest to indoctrinate

teens to believe promiscuous sex is good and should be part of their lives. Movies show teens experiencing the “thrills” of sex with no apparent side affects, teaching boys that they should expect to be the recipients of sexual favors from girls and girls that they should be willing to supply boys with sex.

Television strengthens this message and offers lessons on how to seduce women. Boy viewers are taught that women exist for a male's sexual pleasure and are bombarded with commercials with sexual themes. Casts often include adult characters who are sympathetic with

boys' desire for sex and encourage the fulfillment of that desire. It is

no wonder that the incidences of date rape have increased dramatically among ten-to-fourteen-year-olds in recent years.

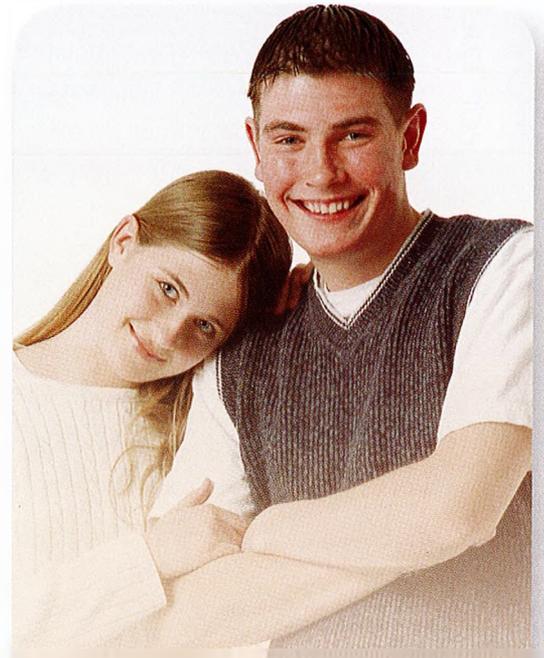
What Can a Parent Do?

First, we must set the example for our sons and daughters by living up to biblical standards ourselves. When our children see that their parents are determined to live lives shaped by Christ, not the culture, they will respect what we say. Second, we must establish godly boundaries regarding their consumption of television, movies, music, and the Internet. Third, we must convey to our daughters—in a clear but compassionate way—why it is wrong for them to dress and behave in a sensuous manner. Finally, we must help our sons feel able to honestly share their struggles with us.

These changes might not come easily, but the alternative—surrendering our children to a godless culture—is unthinkable. ☹



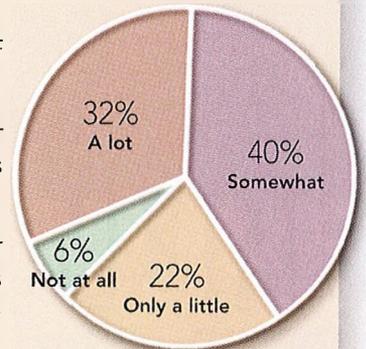
Our culture encourages girls to find their value in their bodies and make it the focal point of their expression. The fashion world is a contributing factor as designers compete to see how “sexy” their clothes for girls can be, sending a clear message: The racier the clothes girls wear, the more people will notice them, the more popular they will be, and the more fun they will have. Wise parents will confront these messages from a biblical standpoint, conveying to their daughters clearly but compassionately why it is wrong for them to dress and behave in a sensuous manner and how much their heavenly Father values them for themselves.



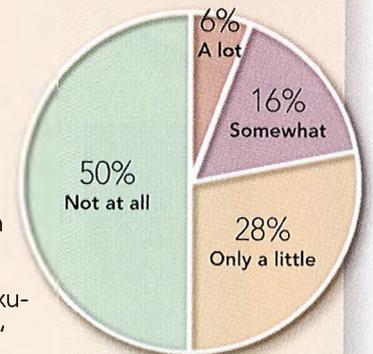
WHAT DO TEENS THINK ABOUT HOW TV INFLUENCES SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG THEIR PEERS?

Nearly three out of four (72%) teens think sex on TV influences the sexual behaviors of kids their age “somewhat” or “a lot,” but just one in four (22%) think it influences their own behavior.

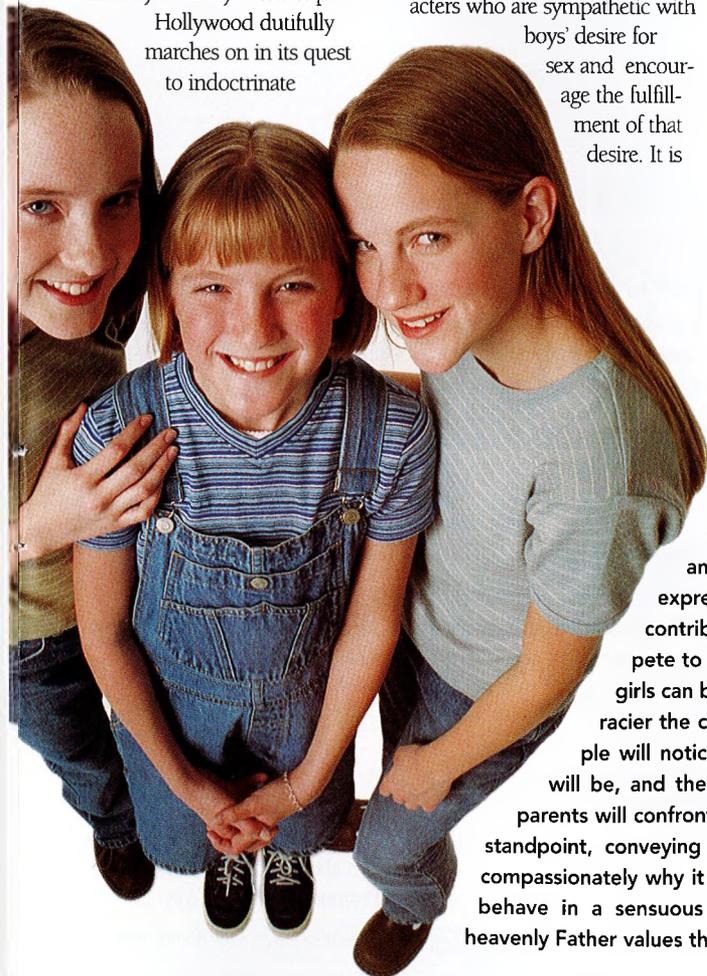
“How much, if at all, do you think the sexual behaviors on TV influence the sexual behaviors of teens your age?”



“How much, if at all, do you think the sexual behaviors on TV influence your own sexual behavior?”



Data: “Teens, Sex and TV,” Kaiser Family Foundation, April 2002

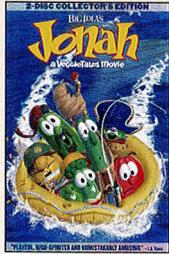


God calls His people to live holy and godly lives.

For people committed to Christian values, popular American culture may seem to be a hopeless case. Today's music, movies, and television shows would have been unimaginable a decade ago. As the public grows more jaded, the crudeness escalates.

Christians too often withdraw from the culture and hunker down in survival mode. We are called to be salt and light in our homes and in the world, however, and we can't counter the culture if we are cowering.

The good news is that Christians, who are instructed by the Word of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, are never helpless against the tide of godless influences. I highly recommend these Scripture-based resources that will help you and your family make wise entertainment choices.



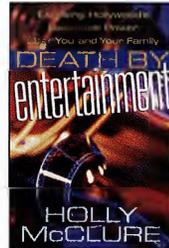
Jonah: A VeggieTales Movie will not disappoint you or your children. Larry the Cucumber and Bob the Tomato's first theatrical release and VeggieTales' first full-length motion picture, *Jonah* is a must-own entertainment option for your family that offers a positive message about second chances. This whale of a film is packed with special features including music videos, hilarious outtakes, featurettes, and more, that all of your family will enjoy. We heartily recommend it.

This resource is not available by phone but can be purchased at:



Death by Entertainment

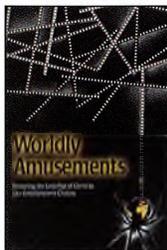
Parents today must wage a war for the minds and hearts of their children. Holly McClure — talk show host, film critic, and mother of three — opens parents' eyes to the dark side of the entertainment industry, which has become our national pulpit, teaching its own culturally relative morality. McClure shows readers how to make wise entertainment choices for themselves and their families and how to empower children and teens to handle the influences of the media with discernment.



BKDTH (272 pages) \$12.99 ea.

Worldly Amusements

Wayne Wilson suggests that all manner of moral pollution is being welcomed into Christian homes and hearts through the sentimentality, laughter, and action provided by the entertainment industry. While the church has fought this influence since the days of the apostles, the generation of Christian leaders raised during the social revolution of the 1960s has largely abandoned the pursuit of a pure heart. Pastor Wilson shows how to evaluate the media in light of God's Word and how to minimize its effects on the seeker of a pure heart.



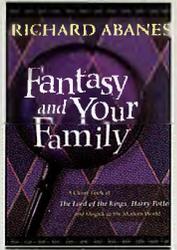
BKAMU (297 pages) \$11.95 ea.

Amounts shown are suggested donations.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Fantasy and Your Family

Are you confused about the myth and magic of fantasy literature? Do you wonder how a "wizard" can represent good in one series and evil in another? In *Fantasy and Your Family: A Closer Look at The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, and Magick in the Modern World*, Richard Abanes explores the underlying elements of popular fantasies and shows parents how to determine what is worthwhile entertainment for their family.



This resource is featured in the Entertainment & Pop Culture Response Kit.

BKFAN (323 pages) \$11.99 ea.

Faith & Family

The ERLC publication *Faith & Family* (formerly *LifeLight*) is a colorful, four-page handout for ministerial staff and lay leaders to use as they address critical issues that affect our faith and our families. This Entertainment & Pop Culture edition is based on 2 Peter 3:11 ("Live holy and godly lives") and focuses on making choices that edify believers and bring glory to God.



For Culture Response Kit subscribers, 100 are included in the kit.

PCBULK03 (4 pages) \$4.95/50

21 Days to Better Family Entertainment

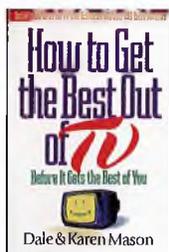
Bob DeMoss gives the tools you need to choose better television viewing and equip your children for a lifetime of interacting with music, movies, advertising, the Internet, magazines, computer games, and the news. In three weeks, you and your family can exchange passive media consumption for smart, safe choices in entertainment.



BKTWE (139 pages) \$3.50 ea. (50% off retail)

How to Get the Best Out of TV

The authors reveal startling statistics on how television affects family communication and spirituality, and the importance of knowing exactly what your kids are watching. Includes over 150 "TV alternative" ideas and reviews over 200 family-friendly videos.



BKGET (260 pages) \$6.50 ea. (50% off retail)

Kids Online

Kids Online offer parents simple steps for keeping children safe while allowing them to enjoy the many benefits of the Internet. It's what parents need to know but may not know enough to ask.



BKKID (269 pages) \$10.39 ea. (20% off retail)

Entertainment & Pop Culture Response Kit contents:

- Bible study and sermon helps
- Faith & Family handouts (qty: 100)
- Fantasy and Your Family (see description above)
- Entertainment & Pop Culture Fact Sheets (qty: 10)
- Promotional Posters (qty: 2)

PKKIT03 (monthly subscription) \$24.95 Additional quantities of kit contents are available.



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Cremation Confusion

Is it unscriptural for a Christian to be cremated?

—Carol Stanley, Manchester, New Hampshire

Timothy George responds: The ancient world knew four methods of disposing of the bodies of the dead. Cremation was the normal practice of Greeks and Romans. Many of them believed in the immortality of the soul and saw no reason to give special attention to the body. Hindus, with their doctrine of reincarnation, still practice cremation. At the other extreme were the Egyptians, who mummified their dead, preserving the corpse indefinitely.

As the catacombs in Rome attest, the early Christians insisted on burying their dead. Christian gravesites were called *coemeteria* (cemetaries), which literally means “sleeping places,” reflecting belief in a future resurrection. Early liturgies for the dead included the reading of Scriptures, prayers, hymns, and almsgiving for the poor.

Why were Christians so concerned about proper disposal of the body? Here are four reasons: (1) The body of every human was created by God, bore his image, and deserved to be treated with respect because of this. (2) The centrality of the Incarnation. When the Word became flesh, God uniquely hallowed human life and bodily existence forever. (3) The Holy Spirit indwelt the bodies of believers, making them vessels of honor. (4) As Jesus himself was buried and raised bodily from the dead, so Christians believed that their burial was a witness to the resurrection yet to come.

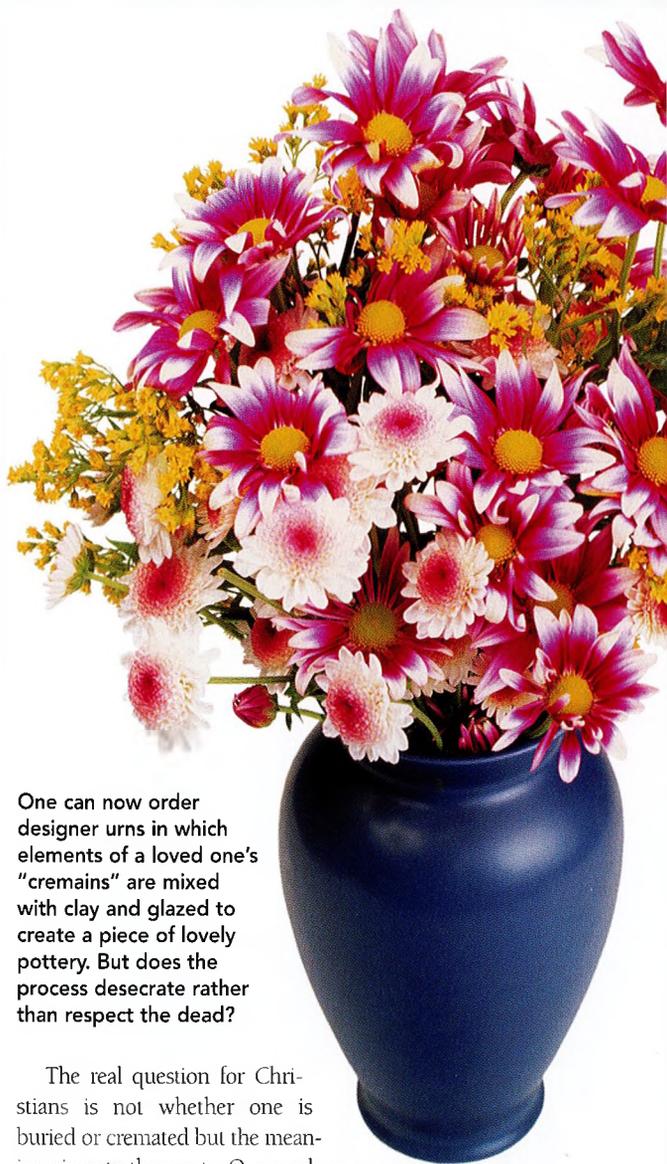
Of course, many martyrs were burned to death, but Christians believed God would bring them forth unimpaired at the resurrection. “We do not fear any loss from any mode of sepulture,” declared Minucius Felix, “but we adhere to the old and better custom of burial.” In the context of the early church, when cremation was associated with pagan rituals and unbiblical beliefs, burial seemed to be a more loving and reverent way to bear witness to God’s ultimate victory over death.

But what about today? The first cremation in America took place in 1876, accompanied by readings from Charles Darwin and the Hindu scriptures. For many years, relatively few persons (mostly liberals and freethinkers) chose cremation. But that has changed dramatically. Only 5 percent of Americans were cremated in 1962; by 2000 it was 25.5 percent. In Japan, where burial is sometimes illegal, the cremation rate is 98 percent. The rise in cremations reflects many factors: concern for land use; the expense of traditional funerals; the loss of community and a sense of “place” in modern transient society; and New Age-type spiritualities.

While the weight of Christian tradition clearly favors burial, the Bible nowhere explicitly condemns cremation. Since 1963 the Roman Catholic Church has permitted cremation while “earnestly recommending” burial as the preferred mode of disposal. Billy Graham has noted (what Christians have always believed) that cremation cannot prevent a sovereign God from calling forth the dead at the end of time.

The Bible should not be used as a proof text either for the necessity of burial or for “cremation on demand.” True, there are several examples of cremation in the Old Testament (Achan, Josh. 7:25; Saul, 1 Sam. 31:12; the King of Edom, Amos 2:1), but they involved God’s judgment and curse. When Paul offered his body to be burned (1 Cor. 13:3), he was speaking of martyrdom, not cremation.

When Jesus said, “Let the dead bury the dead,” he was describing the cost of discipleship, not the cost or method of funerals.



One can now order designer urns in which elements of a loved one’s “cremains” are mixed with clay and glazed to create a piece of lovely pottery. But does the process desecrate rather than respect the dead?

The real question for Christians is not whether one is buried or cremated but the meaning given to these acts. Our modern funeral customs tend to anesthetize us from the ugly reality of death with soft music, plush carpets, and expensive caskets.

The Presbyterian preacher George Buttrick once said, “There is nothing more incongruous than dressing up a corpse in a tuxedo!” Cremation, too, can be done in ways that desecrate rather than respect the dead. For example, one can now order designer urns in which elements of a loved one’s “cremains” are mixed with clay and glazed to create a piece of lovely pottery!

Whether final disposition is by burial or cremation, the Christian church should offer a funeral liturgy in which the reality of death is not camouflaged, and the resurrection of the body is affirmed. We solemnize the departure of our loved ones by reminding ourselves that we brought nothing into this world, and that we can carry nothing out. “Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”[†]

Timothy George is a Christianity Today executive editor and dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University. This article first appeared in the May 21, 2002, issue of Christianity Today. Used by permission of Christianity Today International, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTS A NATION...

This is a tumultuous time in American history. The daily headlines tell of world conflict, corporate corruption, joblessness, and families in despair. Where can we turn to for help other than God? As our culture increasingly embraces immorality and moves further away from biblical principles, we must remember that repentance is a critical component of prayer. In fact, the necessity of turning from sin is reflected in the National Day of Prayer theme and verse for 2003: "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

Scripture relates in Second Chronicles that when Solomon became king of Israel, he learned very quickly that there is a relationship between personal righteousness and the welfare of a nation. After completing construction on the temple and royal palace, he received a visit from the Lord. God told Solomon that if the people of Israel continued in their sin, they could expect Him to "shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague

among my people" (7:13). But God also offered Israel a chance to escape its self-imposed pain and suffering, saying, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (7:14).

Later in the same chapter, the Lord takes His focus off of the people of Israel and places it exclusively on Solomon as an individual, saying, "As for you, if you walk before me as David

your father did, and do all I command, and observe my decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne" (7:17). On the other hand, the Lord warns Solomon of the dire consequences of failing to live a righteous life: "But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land" (7:19-20).

Even though, as this story demonstrates, individual time with God must be our first priority, we also should recognize the power of corporately coming before Him with our requests. That is what the National Day of Prayer is all about! As our individual petitions are joined together and transformed into a mighty chorus, we have the power to usher in a revival that will sweep through our nation.

By joining together in prayer, we are boldly answering Christ's

call to be "salt" and "light" in a dark world. I hope you'll take part in a prayer observance on May 1, joining with your fellow Americans in prayer and repentance on behalf of our country. In so doing, may we unleash the power of God to transform both individuals and our nation! 

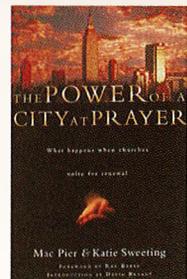


This article was written by Shirley Dobson, chairman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force since 1991.

A CITY AT PRAYER

Months before Sept. 11, 2001, many Greater New York churches had united in one of the world's largest urban prayer movements. So when disaster struck, the churches and people were already in place to pray.

Mac Pier and Katie Sweeting, coordinators for Concerts of Prayer Greater New York, have written about their experiences, explaining how to build an urban prayer ministry and sharing powerful examples of how prayer movements have changed neighborhoods, communities, and cities around the world—including New York City before and after Sept. 11, 2001. (InterVarsity Press)

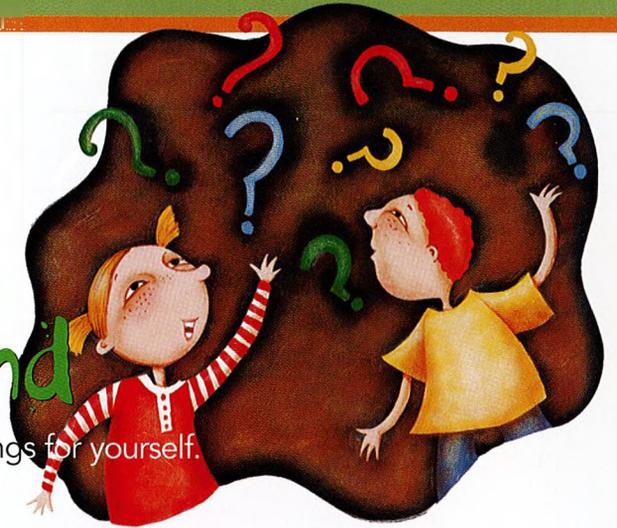


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*Building a Foundation for Life***Making Choices with God in Mind**

The older you get, the more you have to decide things for yourself.



BY DWAYNE HASTINGS

When I was little, I didn't go many places that my Mom or Dad didn't take me. I ate only the healthy food that my Mom or Dad made for dinner or put in my lunchbox. I could play only in my backyard. I wore whatever clothes my parents picked out for me.

But as I grew up, I began to make choices for myself. Where was I going to ride my bike? What sugary junk food could I buy with my allowance at the corner market? Who would I play with in the neighborhood? How could I wear my favorite T-shirt all week without my Mom telling me to put it in the dirty clothes basket? I also began making decisions about doing things and saying things that I knew might not please my Mom and Dad—deciding whether to make the right choice or the wrong choice. I became responsible for my own actions and thoughts.

Most of us have seen the classic movie, *The Wizard of Oz*. In the movie, Dorothy meets a scarecrow where you normally meet a scarecrow—in a cornfield. While scarecrows are supposed to scare crows away from the field, this scarecrow wasn't doing his job. The big black birds sat on his shoulders and his hat, crowing with relish. This scarecrow had another problem. He was propped up in the field right where the road went in two very different directions. When Dorothy asked him which way to go, he pointed both directions—to the road on the left and to the road on the right. He was confused. (But he was just a scarecrow stuffed with straw, and who talks to a scarecrow anyway?)

When we have a decision to make, we often say we have come to a fork in the road. Now that's not the kind of fork you eat your food with; it is a place where the road splits and goes two different ways. In life we must make decisions every day, and God lets us make those choices. The choices often are very different, like the two roads by the cornfield—to do the right thing or the wrong thing, to please God or to make Him sad.

That's why we cannot trust in scarecrows or people who are confused about what is right and what is wrong. We should trust in God and God alone. When we face a decision that involves a right way and a wrong way, we should recognize the right way and choose wisely. The better we know God by reading the Bible and praying to Him, the better able we will be to make a choice that pleases Him.

Every day God gives us the opportunity to make choices about saying something nice or saying something mean. We have choices about doing something kind or doing something naughty. We have choices about thinking something good or thinking something bad. When you have a decision to make about what to say or do or think, I hope you will make the right choice that will honor God.

Bible truth: God is honored when we make the right choice.

Bible verse: Proverbs 16:16

RECOMMENDED READING

Best-selling author Kenneth N. Taylor does much more than tell children what is right and wrong in his latest work, *Right Choices*. He incorporates a solid biblical foundation and vivid illustrations to help young children discern what God says is right and wrong about twenty-six topics. "Wrong" topics include lying, cheating, stealing, fighting, and making fun of others. "Right" topics teach children to honor their parents, talk to God often, be patient, keep promises, and read and obey the Bible. (Tyndale Kids)



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