

No Greater Joy

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A Will To Dominate

The following article deals with a very important subject that we have touched on before but never discussed in detail—a child's will to dominate. I chose this letter because it so clearly represents the many letters we receive.

Though this mother has a good attitude and represents her responses as calm and controlled, she has failed to properly train. She is perplexed because her younger daughter is not so dominant. She feels there is something different about this one. All children occasionally manifest a will to dominate, but only a few are as intense as this child. Things can get out of hand in a hurry.

I underlined portions of her letter to draw your attention to key statements that reveal the child's attitude.

I know this article is going to liberate many of you from uncertainties that have kept you from being firm and forceful with your little dictators.

I have also given practical solutions for eradicating this diabolical will to dominate.

Dear Michael and Debi,

Our daughter Sue is almost four. She has been a handful right from birth. In the hospital nursery they had to keep her in a separate room because her screaming disrupted the other babies! The hospital nursery workers told my husband that we were going to have our hands full. Sue never wanted to be cuddled until she was sick for the first time at 8 months of age. She wouldn't even let us take her hand to show her things, even pat-a-cake! Sue was frustrated (and still is) about everything. frustrated that she couldn't roll, mad that she couldn't sit, furious that she couldn't walk or talk.

We didn't help matters by always putting her to sleep by means of walking, rocking, or nursing. Consequently, she never learned patience. We always went to her or picked her up with the first whimper, since we knew it would soon turn into a full blown, purple faced, raging fit. She had a temper. Finally at eleven months of age we began proper and consistent training, and when she turned one she at last began sleeping through the night.

When I asked her to put up her toys, she would throw the toys the other way, even after I would make a fun game of it, doing most of it myself. Or sometimes she would pick one item up as slow as a turtle, or place the toy on the edge of the bucket, so more often than not it would fall out, not in.

And yes, after a long time of working on the cleanup concept, I'm sure I applied pressure - nothing ever got cleaned up!

She's still the same, picking up items with her feet or mouth, or going on to play with something else when I leave the room. Funny how her sister Ruth was taught the same way, and right from the start she loved putting things in buckets, and is a wonderful cleaner.

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Sue is the same if I ask her to put her sandals on and go collect the chicken eggs. She puts her boots on instead. I'll say, "No Sue, your sandals." So she puts her sandals on backwards. I'll say, "No Sue, put them on properly," and she'll put them on and run out, only to take them off when she gets outside. When I realize she hasn't returned with the eggs, I look out and see her sandals are off her feet and she is playing in the mud. I finally had to take away the privilege of collecting eggs, adding it to my responsibilities.

Staying in bed has been an issue since the 2nd week after we put her in a big bed. The novelty wore off and she realized her freedom, even though she understood the rules - no getting out of bed unless she calls and asks. Nap time and bedtime became spanking time. Off the bed she would come 2, 4, 10, 20 or more times! When we couldn't take her bottom getting another spanking, we began to look for other penalties. If she got off the bed, we put her in the playpen (the crib was then occupied by her baby sister). She hated that, and would throw a fit and a half. She quickly learned how to climb out of the playpen. We finally took down her big bed and let her sleep on the floor.

Now that little brother has arrived, Sue and Ruth share a room. Ruth, who never questioned our authority about when it was time to go to bed, and who would be breathing heavily in less than five minutes, now jumps off the bed along with Sue. Sue will also call out many, many times, keeping herself and us up until nearly 10:00 some nights.

We make sure all needs are met before lights are out (potty, drink of water, read a Bible story, tucked in, one song while I rub backs, a few more minutes of 'talk about' if it's not too late, and send daddy in one more time). Then the games begin. She wants more water. We say no. She wants a teddy bear or doll. She wants to talk some more. She wants another hug. She wants her back rubbed again. She wants more kisses or hugs. She wants to blow us kisses. The problem is, we have found that if we deny her any of the things she requests, and she goes to sleep on a bad note, like if we spank her for anything, she wakes screaming in the middle of the night, demanding the one thing we denied her before putting her to bed.

This literally went on for weeks. Lack of sleep was affecting everyone. We warned her before bed not to wake everyone up in the night or she would be spanked the next morning. That did not faze her. If she goes to sleep on a good note, with no spanking, then there is no problem in the middle of the night. But we can't give her everything she demands at all hours of the night.

Sibling rivalry is another issue. Sue is selfish to the extreme, and very mean to her sister. She 'bugs' her sister all the time,

Tom Slayman, laboring in a prison somewhere

Details are either changed or not given in order to protect the ministry.

We have talked about O__ before, but we now have the complete story. He's been in prison at least 10 years. He's a very strong Christian man. He was a building leader in Building D (which became drug free). The church in the prison then sent him to Building P, which is the drug den of the whole prison. He started some meetings and got some of the men saved and they stopped using drugs. The other inmates that are making a living off of drugs told the guards that he was instigating a riot. So they shackled O__ and sent him to Building Q.

He was to be there for 30 days. But at the end of the 30 days, he volunteered to stay to minister to the others in the building. This building is the worst of the worst. He has now been in there for 13 months, wearing big heavy chains and preaching the gospel.

But he is going to be released from Q soon and the church is sending him to Building J, where there is a big problem with the Jehovah's Witnesses.

He's a real modern day Paul. When Tom ministers to him, he comes away wondering just who got ministered to! O__ is a true man of God.

☺

which warrants a spanking, and she usually takes advantage of the times I am nursing her brother. (He was on oxygen and monitors for a long while and so was used to nursing in a quiet room - now if I try it in any other location, he refuses. He also has to be upright after feeding so I can't just lay him down and go chastise her during his feeding.) She knows she will be punished, but enjoys the moment to it's fullest.

Her behavior during spanking is difficult as well. I will ask her if she knows why she's going to get a spanking, and she will say, "for being mean to Ruth." Then when I spank her she will flail, arch, and start SCREAMING, "huggie, huggie, huggie," over and over. I've told her before that when she's ready to hug to stand up and come get one, so I now consider this screaming a form of talking back and I spank her again and again and again. We go through this every time. It is a very tiring day.

Now, this whole letter has begun to sound as if we have WWII going on in our home constantly. Admittedly, my husband often comments that Sue may be only a skinny little 30 pounds, but when she wakes in the morning in a foul mood, the whole family is completely affected the rest of the day. She can be a real sweetie, saying "Mama, you're the best!" Or in the middle of brushing her teeth she'll stop and give me a hug, or she'll put a whole bunch of toys together into a bag and give me her "present."

She is so easily distracted, and most times her behavior is not necessarily out and out disobedience. Yes, there is a standard that she has to meet, but spankings don't seem to change her behavior. She even has missed out on numerous family outings. If she throws a fit, we do not allow her to go with us, but take her to my mother to keep. When we return, she acts indifferent and boasts of what a swell time SHE had.

This letter has become quite lengthy. I have been "Rambling" a bit myself. Sue has so much energy, a short attention span, a wicked temper, and a very strong will, and it all manifests itself in a disregard for rules. We thought that by age four we wouldn't need to spank nearly so often. But instead of decreasing, the instances have increased!

Can you offer any suggestions?

TEXAS & CALIFORNIA

Michael and Deb will be touring Texas, doing seminars, during the first and second weeks of November. If you would like to have them minister at your location, and you are in a position to make that decision, contact us by email or letter. Include your phone number or email address, and we will call you to work out the details. There will be one Saturday available for an all day seminar. There is no charge.

We will help you promote your seminar by sending invitations to those on our mailing list in your area.

Mike and Deb will be touring California in February, 2001.

If you are on our mailing list you will be notified of any seminars in your area.

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Michael discusses the letter

This mother said of her daughter, "She has been a handful right from birth." She tends to think her child's problems are not learned but rather inherited. She continues, "She never wanted to be cuddled." There are many physical reasons why a newborn may be very uncomfortable, in pain even, from being touched. Originally, the screaming may have had a physical cause. How-

ever, the physical problems will remedy themselves in time, but the attitude that she developed while in that state of discomfort is not a product of genetics or a birth condition. Pain doesn't make a child selfish and mean, but it can provide an opportunity for selfishness to grow. Note: this mother called her one-year-old daughter's actions "*temper.*" She may have begun life with some kind of discomfort, but eleven months later, her anger was a learned habit.

She said that when she "*asked her to put up her toys, she would throw the toys the other way,*" or "*she would pick one item up as slow as a turtle, or place the toy on the edge of the bucket, so more often than not it would fall out, not in.*" The actions of this child cannot be explained in terms of personality. She had developed a willfulness to defy authority. Her slow "obedience" was a deliberate statement that, though they had the power to force compliance, they did not have jurisdiction over her soul.

This mother said her daughter is "*still the same, picking up items with her feet or mouth, or going on to play with something else when I leave the room.*" By picking up items with her feet or mouth, she was technically obeying while proving her independence. It was symbolic obedience, designed to avoid the crises of disobedience, while at the same time making a statement of defiance.

She said, "*Her sister Ruth was taught the same way, and right from the start she loved putting things in buckets, and is a wonderful cleaner.*" It is true that one child will be born with a personality that is more social and group minded, while another from the same family will be more independent in nature. When a mare has two colts, one may be wild and full of spunk, hard to break, while the other may follow its master around like a dog. Both of them can be broken to the saddle, but with different techniques. If a trainer uses the same methods on both horses, he

may train the compliant horse, while making a rebel of the spunky one. Another trainer, using a more over-riding technique, may train the spunky horse while crushing the spirit of the gentle-natured horse.

All children are different. You may have four that are gentle and one that likes to jump fences and investigate the unknown. The more independent natured horses are more likely to 'go bad' if they are not handled correctly. If the gentle horses 'go bad' it is not so obvious because they don't jump fences and kick you. They just stand with their heads down, afraid to enjoy themselves. Ruth is gentle in nature while Sue is independent, but we expect a good attitude and complete obedience from both of them.

Here is where it gets interesting. Mother said, "*If I ask her to put her sandals on and go collect the chicken eggs, she puts her boots on instead. I'll say, 'No Sue – your sandals.' So she puts her sandals on backwards. I'll say, 'No Sue, put them on properly,' and she'll put them on and run out, only to take them off when she gets outside. When I realize she hasn't returned with the eggs, I look out and see her sandals are off her feet and she is playing in the mud.*" Again, what you are seeing is a will to dominate. Sue is consumed with the joys of independent action. She is exhilarated by defying authority. We are seeing the heart of a rebel. It is not as if she had a preference for backward shoes. She will always choose the opposite side of an issue. She wants conflict, because only in conflict can she prove her independence. She wants to do the opposite because that is who she has decided to be.

When Sue would not stay in bed, Mother removed the bed and let her sleep on the floor. Sue won the battle. Every time she sleeps on the floor she knows that her spirit has not been broken. Mother is the one that broke. Her parents gave up. They couldn't win the battle of the bed, so

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not trusting their own authority, they disposed of the game. "Ha, weak, spineless parents; they can't tell me what to do!" That '*fit and a half*' is just a tool to intimidate her parents.

Mother said, "*We make sure all needs are met before lights are out. (potty, drink of water, read a Bible story, tucked in, one song while I rub backs, a few more minutes of 'talk about' if it's not too late, and send daddy in one more time. Then the games begin. She wants more water. We say no. She wants a teddy bear or doll. She wants to talk some more. She wants another hug. She wants her back rubbed again. She wants more kisses or hugs. She wants to blow us kisses. The problem is, we have found that if we deny her any of the things she requests, and she goes to sleep on a bad note, like if we spank her for anything, she wakes screaming in the middle of the night, demanding the one thing we denied her before putting her to bed.*"

She was correct in calling it a game. Sue is not thirsty or lonely or needing to go potty. She is seeking one last symbolic victory before going to bed. If I read this home correctly, she is not starved for affection or approval. She is not suffering from "low self-esteem." She is enjoying the conquest. She knows where her sensitive mother is vulnerable, where she is more likely to feel guilt, to feel the need to comply. How can she refuse one more hug, one more kind word? She has her mother where she is most tender. Her actions say, "Don't be a bad mother, prove that you love me by doing what I want. I

am just a poor, thirsty child about to go to bed dehydrated. I just need to hear your compliant voice one more time before I go to sleep. I need a token of obeisance before you turn the lights out on my kingdom. Prove your loyalty and my worth one more time, and then my ego will be big enough to cradle me until morning.”

It is a *game* of tug-of-wills. Games are played for the sake of playing. If Sue cannot win the prize, then it is enough to know that she fought a good fight, that she went down swinging.

It is horrible in its implications, that when her parents force compliance, she goes to sleep with that defeat brewing in her soul, and that she wakes in the night with renewed zeal to revive the battle and establish her dominance. Even should she lose the battle, the fact that she woke her parents and stirred their anger gives her a satisfaction that she is still alive, still vital, still autonomous, supreme in her independence.

Mother said, “*Sibling rivalry is another issue. Sue is selfish to the extreme, and very mean to her sister.*” Extreme selfishness is not only valuing self above others; it is viewing others as material to be spent and wasted for one’s own entertainment.

Mother said, “*She ‘bugs’ her sister all the time, which warrants a spanking, and she usually takes advantage of the times I am nursing her brother (he was on oxygen and monitors for a long while and so was used to nursing in a quiet room – now if I try it in any other location, he refuses. He also has to be upright after feeding so I can’t just lay him down and go chastise her during his feeding).*”

On a side note to this mother: By catering to your son’s sensitivity, nursing him where and how he is comfortable, you are allowing him to dictate the terms under which he will be happy. Wean him from his demands for solitude. If you don’t, he will follow in Sue’s footsteps. The

way to re-condition him is to go to your secluded place and leave the door open so as to make him a little uncomfortable, but not enough to prevent him from nursing. Every time you nurse him, introduce just a little more noise and confusion until he finds himself nursing while you are singing and jogging. It will work. What you condition a child into, you can condition him out of.

Mother said, “*She knows she will be punished, but enjoys the moment to it’s fullest.*” I know prisoners that will hit a guard, knowing that they are going to have their sentences lengthened, spend time in solitary confinement, lose privileges, have their parole date put off, and possibly get a beating as well. Why do they do it, knowing the suffering it will cost them? Because at that moment there is nothing more important in the uni-

Extreme selfishness is not only valuing self above others; it is viewing others as material to be spent and wasted for one’s own entertainment.

verse than “showing this punk guard that I will not take this off nobody.” That attitude started before 12 months of age, and no one was ever big enough to stand up to him.

When Sue interrupts a spanking, crying “*huggie,*” it is nothing more than a ploy to stop her immediate suffering. At some time in the past, this diversion worked, and she keeps trying to use it, hoping it will work again. She is appealing to motherly instincts—engaging in psychological warfare, a way whereby she can gain the upper hand in the contest. **She is seeking to redefine the issues by focusing on mother’s feelings rather than her own disobedience.**

In the case where a kid is truly broken and contrite, and the child approaches you for reassurance, the hug would be appropriate, but not when it is used as a diversion.

I did not hug my kids after spanking them. I didn’t want to con-

fuse the issue. Spanking is a time when you are rejecting an attitude or behavior, not a time to confer a reward. I had no fear of communicating rejection, for I spent 100 minutes smiling into the face of my child for every one minute that I spent disapproving of him. Don’t confuse the issue by trying to do two things at the same time. Spank your child. Then tell her to dry it up. And with no show of emotion, tell her to get back to what she was suppose to be doing to begin with. It is all over in thirty seconds. No trips to the bedroom—no special, emotional sessions. When they do something lovely, then you can love them.

She said that Sue “*can be a real sweetie, saying ‘Mama, you’re the best!’ Or in the middle of brushing her teeth she’ll stop and give me a hug, or she’ll put a whole bunch of toys together into a bag and give me her ‘present.’*” Children that have a will to dominate do not always seek confrontation. They can appreciate love and peace just like anyone else. It is just when you cross the child’s will, or

when the demon of dominance (speaking figuratively) takes her that she is compelled to crush all contenders. **A foul mood is animosity. It is a rejection and condemnation of others. In short, it is hatred and anger.**

Mother said, “*She even has missed out on numerous family outings. If she throws a fit, we do not allow her to go with us, but take her to my mother to keep. When we return, she acts indifferent and boasts of what a swell time SHE had.*” Her ‘act’ of indifference is just another way of robbing her parents of winning the contest, or it is a way of professing to have won by claiming to have had a better time than she would have had if she had gone with them. She sees that it hurts them and she enjoys the appearance of control, even in the midst of defeat.

What motivates her?

(Continued on page 7)

Dear Pearls,

I am the 16 year old daughter of an ardent fan of yours, and I am also a believer in the Train Up A Child—how do you put it—system. My parents did not have any of your materials until about 4 years back—a little late to start with my younger sister and me. But my mother did have an interesting technique of discipline in the case of tantrums. When one of us threw a fit, she would pick us up by the ankles and swing us upside down. It's very difficult to maintain strenuous breathing when gravity is pulling all your blood to your head, and it's also very scary to be swung carelessly around the kitchen while your mommy cooks breakfast. That did the trick while we were small and then ol' Mr. Spoon came. I declare, if a spoon could not hold up to a whack across my rear, Mom would put it back on the store shelf. I'm very grateful to Mr. Spoon.

My mother was 99% consistent in her training. We are not the worst kids, but for her sake I wish she had carried Mrs. Spoon in her purse from the beginning of my adolescence.

When we got too old for spankings, Mom got creative. "Drop and give me 20!" she'd bark when somebody whined. And right there, in the middle of the store, parking lot, church, or wherever, she'd make us do push-ups. You do not want to be weak and be this lady's child at the same time! At first, I would piddle around and do 5, then rest, do 5 more, then rest again, and so on. But one time she was in a hurry, so she grabbed the back of my britches and pumped me up and down like a limp stick. I doubt that anybody saw me, but I was scared to death that someone had and was now laughing at me behind my back. From then on, I took great care in how I behaved in public. But for security's sake, I practiced push-ups in secret. The time came when Mom noticed that 20 push-ups no longer took me 20 minutes, so the next time she told me to "drop," she demanded 50. I was horrified, and Mom was tickled to death. That is the reason I can now chunk a 50 pound bale of hay or carry 2 fifty pound feed bags, one on each shoulder.

My mother was not 100% consistent in our chastisement. Often times the spankings came only when her temper had been pushed to the limit. Rebellion is rooted in my heart. Just this morning she called me and I laid there thinking, "Delayed obedience is disobedience," and so grudgingly began to move. Then another thought swept through me, "I'm not delaying my obedience, I'm being blatantly disobedient."

I have read your books and am trying my hardest to be the child I was meant to be. I fail daily, but the smile on Mom's face when I do what I'm supposed to do makes all my struggles worth it.

Thank you so much for showing me the right way. My relationship with my parents is steadily improving. I am also able to help some family friends with their 2 little children as they use your techniques, and I am able to support them when I watch Rachel and Josh on Bible Study nights.

I have also taught two of my friends (who both love babies and plan to have several) how to raise them and use your techniques. They have their doubts, naturally, but every time they see how well behaved those two tots are, they gain a little more confidence. I will always be grateful to my Mom and you.

Love in Christ, Megan

Dear Strong Megan,

Your mother did something right. She has your heart, even if your flesh is sometimes unruly. It is obvious that you and your mom have a sense of humor. That will take you a long way. You are wise to be able to see your parent's faults, which don't seem to be many, and still respect and love them. You are also wise to assume responsibility for the development of your own character. I would like to meet you and your parents. If you are ever in one of our seminars, come up and introduce yourself. Maybe you will sass your mother in public. I would like to see a girl do 50 push-ups!

Michael Pearl

(Continued from page 5)

When we see this nearly four-year-old child exhibiting bizarre defiance, our first thought is, *Why?* What is in her mind when she puts her sandals on backwards? It seems so pointless. What motivates her to be antisocial? Why antagonize her mother, who's approval she must value? We could understand if she was trying to avoid some difficult responsibility or gain some secret pleasure. Deviant behavior makes sense if it is driven by a desire to eat forbidden fruit, but who wants to drink water when you are not thirsty, or get up out of bed so you can get another spanking? Why create your own misery?

In criminal cases, the prosecutor must first establish a motive, for no one acts without sufficient cause. Was it passion, greed, lust? What did the perpetrator hope to gain? When the one known to have committed a crime has no motive, the authorities consider him mentally ill. A sound mind will always choose the path of pleasure, passion, or profit. His trail may be twisted and evil, but it can always be explained in terms of self-gratification—except in the case of the psychopathic and children like Sue.

She will sabotage any parental

attempt to introduce control and reason. It is as if everything was wired backwards. Not all children are like this, but there are enough of them to make birth control popular and to keep the pharmaceutical companies wealthy selling Ritalin.

This concerned and perplexed mother is not alone. We receive hundreds of letters describing conditions identical to Sue's.

Disciples of the New World Order line up to drug their children into oblivion, while Christian parents are lining up to get the devils cast out of their kids. I could wish the problems were as simple as demon possession. The Christian family can rid their children of devils in a thirty second prayer. But if this deviant behavior we see in children like Sue is a manifestation of their own character, then the fall of Adam is still in progress, and parents have a front row seat to ongoing depravity.

Defiance itself

The only factor common to all her weird acts of defiance is defiance itself. She seeks to dominate because that is where her greatest pleasure lies. Sue finds pleasure in standing crossways to the will of others. She is on a quest for sovereignty—to be the supreme potentate. She will not make

the compromises necessary to be a part of society. She has set herself against the rules of group cooperation. She seeks to live beyond authority.

The original sin

Lucifer was the first one to take independent action. The Bible speaks of his motive: "*I will ascend up; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God (above other angels and cherubim); I will be like the most high (be like God) (Isaiah 14:14).*" The original sin was not committed by Adam. It was committed by Lucifer, the cherub. He developed a will to dominate, to control, to call the shots, to direct not only his affairs, but the affairs of others. He wanted to be sovereign.

Lucifer (now known as Satan) was disembodied and cast down to the earth (then called Eden) before Adam and Eve were created. (Is. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:13-17; Job 38:7; Luke 10:17; Rev. 12:9) He knows that he will end in the fires of hell. He has no hope of winning, yet he still seeks symbolic victories. With defeat certain, he seeks gestures of defiance. He wants to express his rebellion in tokens of contempt. Satan finds pleasure in the knowledge that he is not giving God the pleasure of

Michael & Debi Pearl published *To Train Up a Child* in August 1994. By September of 2000 over 260,000 English copies had been sold. It has also been translated into several foreign languages, including Ukrainian, Mandarin (Chinese), Portuguese, German, and Spanish.

This publication came about as a way to answer many questions we receive in the mail each day. The Pearls receive no remuneration from the sale of these books and tapes. This is a ministry operated through The Church At Cane Creek where Michael Pearl is pastor/teacher. The low prices reflect our concern to make these materials available to as many as possible. We give a 38-45% discount on books by the Pearls when purchased in volumes of eight or more. We also make available a limited number of books and videos that we believe will be a great blessing to your family.

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supremacy. In his twisted thinking, his very existence, every defiant thought and act of noncompliance, is a denial of the sovereignty of God. In that alone he finds meaning and purpose. There can be no ultimate pleasure for Satan, so he lives for the immediate pleasure of reveling in his own autonomy, in defiance of God. Seeing this, we can understand why “God prepared hell for the devil and his angels.”

So, who is to blame?

Who is at fault? Did Sue’s parents bring her to this, or is it the fault of something that occurred on the theological battleground before she was born—the fault of God? Did she inherit this behavior? You will be in step with current trends if you label her behavior as “*the sins of the parents visited on the children.*” When we mortals are called to account for our stewardship, we are prone to pass the blame.

To hear Christians explain their failures, either Adam is to blame, the devil, or my “sinful nature.” I am a victim. My child is a victim. We are helpless. To be known as psychologically astute you must not demand anything of your child or yourself, for, according to trends, we are capable of nothing but toleration and compassion. This concept has been prevalent in all generations, but our day could be called “The Age of the Victim.”

Likewise, in this era of “science,” everything, including behavior, can be explained in terms of chemicals, genetics, predispositions, personality types, in short—a sort of cosmic fate. No one is responsible. So the politically correct approach is to either ignore bad behavior or sedate it with chemicals.

But this mother does not subscribe to a philosophy or theology that leaves her helpless. Though she is perplexed as to what she should do, she knows that there are answers, things she can do that will purge her daughter of this diabolical will to

dominate.

How and Why

Even before Adam and Eve sinned, the element in their natures that drew them to disobedience was a desire for pleasure—the pleasure of taste, the pleasure of sight, and the pleasure of mental ascendancy. God created us with a desire for pleasure, something that is an essential part of his nature. God seeks the pleasure of his own will. Pleasure in any form is the elementary motivation of the human heart.

We think of pleasure as primarily physical or sensual, but there is also pleasure of the mind, the spirit, and the emotions. The third aspect of Eve’s temptation was an appeal to her desire for the pleasure of knowing, of being on the inside, of ascending by means of the power of knowledge. It was not her desire for pleasure that was evil. Eve sinned because she sought pleasure without regard to duty.

God placed the pleasure seeking

Sue’s only value was pleasure for the sake of its inherent satisfaction.

parts of Adam and Eve under the control of their spirits and minds. Their volitional part determined just which pleasure they would ultimately value—the pleasure of existing in fellowship with God, under his authority, or the pleasure of independent, self-centered action. Eve chose the lower road of personal sovereignty and independent action. Children recapitulate the fall of Adam and Eve in their own quests for pleasure.

Pleasure and Pain

During those first weeks, Sue became conscious of the pleasure of her existence. Infants know only pleasure and pain—the pain of being hungry, and the pleasure of nursing; the pain of being sleepy, and the pleasure of a

quiet room and soft blanket; the pain of a wet diaper, and the pleasure of having mother change it.

At first Sue found all of her pleasure in having her bodily needs met, but in a few days, as she nursed and satisfied her hunger, she came to view the act itself as pleasurable. When her tummy ached and mother burped her, she came to enjoy being held and cooed. Life opened up and she discovered the world was a wonderful place to excite not only the senses, but the mind and spirit as well. Her drives were all instinctive. She was incapable of any sense of responsibility or duty. Her only value was pleasure for the sake of its inherent satisfaction.

As she experienced the gratification of having her physical and emotional needs met, she developed wants as well—things that weren’t essential but felt good all the same. To her, there was no distinction. During those early months, parents cannot make any distinction either, and by the time they do, it is far past the time to begin training. Parents live to serve the child, and the child lives to be served. It is a mutually beneficial arrangement. It is when parents allow the child to stay on the throne too long that problems occur.

The Contest Begins

When Sue was just weeks old, because her parents rushed to meet her every need, she developed a conviction that the world owed her constant pleasure, and that her parents were there to serve her. But there were times when she was cold or hungry, and her parents were unaware of her needs, or for some reason they failed to act immediately. At such times she responded as any human or animal would; she expressed discomfort through body language and whining noises. Her parents did what is natural for parents; they rushed to satisfy the needs (and wants) of their helpless infant. Since the whining brought a favorable response, she very quickly realized that she had control over those people

meeting her needs. The whining was adopted as a form of communication. Why not? Parents understood it and responded favorably.

In time, whining lost some of its power, so she increased its intensity until it became screaming fits, which worked even better. Wow! She had the power to manipulate her parents. So her communication took on a more demanding and belligerent tone.

She was pragmatic. If it works, use it. If it feels good, do it. And all this by her first birthday! It was at this time that Sue's parents started training her. Not too late to train, but certainly too late to start.

The roots of domination

When Sue got a little older, her parents lost some of that instinctual tolerance that parents have for their helpless infants. They became increasingly dissatisfied with her intimidating aggression. They kept thinking she would grow out of it, but instead she perfected her techniques. Having decided she was old enough to be disciplined, they started resisting her demands. But Sue did not want to give up her throne, so she intensified the use of tools that had always been effective—*fits and a*

half.” Sometimes she got her way and sometimes she lost the battle. But she found her occasional victory-of-the-wills to be a great pleasure, because at the end of the battle she obtained the indulgence she desired.

Symbolic victories

But it didn't stop there. Originally the war-of-the-wills occurred over issues of indulgence. The child wanted to eat, stay awake, put her shoes on, take her shoes off, not eat a certain thing, etc. Parents had one view and the child had another. But after winning enough battles, Sue developed an addiction to the heady sensations of sovereignty. She found

Eve's temptation—to be like the gods, to know good and evil without making any judgments. The Apostle John calls it “the pride of life.” Originally it was just a child's desire for pleasure, but not any more. It is now something much worse. **This child's desire for pleasure has now mutated into a desire to dominate.** This will to dominate is amazing in its strength, profound in its dedication and consistency, and evil in its disregard for the needs of others. We have discovered the soil in which the seed of sin is germinated.

When the will to dominate grows up

When tyrants grow up, they learn to control their inclinations in situations where they could embarrass themselves or lose their jobs or friends. The shameful thing is that when they go home, out of the public eye, they take out their need to dominate on

their families. Most marital problems are rooted in the fact that one or both parties are trying to dominate the other. Women, normally thought of as more passive than men, are just as prone to have a will to dominate, but, due to their inferior physical stature, their tactics are more subtle than Sue's. They will use weakness, bitterness, or emotional intimidation as a lever to control others.

Reclaiming your authority

Now for some answers. As Christian parents, we do not want our children to grow up belligerent and controlling. We are not content to wait until social concerns cause them to redirect their aggressions. We see it as a heart problem that needs to be treated at the root.

In one word, I am going to give you the basic principle that will lead to banishing this disease of dominance—WIN—because that is the rule by which the child is playing. When the child decided to be confrontational and challenge your authority, it was for the purpose of

This will to dominate is amazing in its strength, profound in its dedication and consistency, and evil in its disregard for the needs of others.

great mental satisfaction in using other people to serve her wants. It made her drunk with power to stand against what she knew to be the greatest force in the universe—her parents.

Note carefully. Here is the final step that brought Sue to where we find her in this letter. **She now seeks symbolic victories over her parents**—over all authority. She will take a position for no other reason than that it is the opposite of her parents', thus enabling her to experience the exhilaration of the fight, with the only prize being the title of winner. Sue now seeks opportunities to score victories over her parents. She finds pleasure in humbling them, in taking the wind out of their sails; just to win the contest of wills, to prove her prowess, to demonstrate her autonomy, to be her own person, to know that no one can make her bend or bow—what joy unspeakable and full of power!

The seed of sin

This was the third aspect of

Yes, it's OK with us

Several people have written asking if it is OK with us if they buy our material and resell it. Absolutely! We encourage you to purchase our materials in volume and resell them at homeschool conventions or wherever your imagination takes you. Some people have found they can supplement their income and have a ministry at the same time. We will also furnish you with a number of newsletters to give away.

winning a game. When you win, the child loses, and the game ceases to be fun. There is no pleasure for the child in always losing. A gambler is compelled to gamble as long as there is hope of winning. Addiction is kept alive by the hope of an occasional win. If a gambler suffered the misery of losing his savings, home, car, job, family, health, and honor, he would still gamble, because even in losing, his senses are brought to a pitch of keenness and vitality. He finds pleasure in the game, whether he wins or loses, as long as there is hope of winning. However, if he knew that the table was rigged so that he could never win, it would instantly purge him of his compulsion, because there would be no game, no suspense, no risk, and no possibility of the thrill of winning. Gambling at that table would become as dull as the lawnmower blade.

Addiction

Sue's addiction to dominance is as strong as any addiction to heroin, alcohol, pornography, or gambling. Lust seeks opportunity. The possibility of opportunity keeps lust simmering on the front burner. This mother said that spanking was just not working. Just as the gambler will lose time after time, yet ignore the pain and press on in hopes of a better day, so a child will suffer the pain of spanking time after time, in hopes of winning the blessed reward of dominance the next time—or maybe the next. If Sue became convinced that there was no game and no chance of winning, that there would never be the “thrill of victory,” only “the agony of defeat,” she would drop the game and go where she could find true pleasure.

Peace on earth, good will toward men

Leftwing dogma would advocate turning the other cheek. They would advise us to give the child everything she wants, and when she is bloated

with her personal expressions, she will normalize. But the Junges, Darwins, and Deweys are ready in the wings with drugs in the event their social experimentations don't work. If their promiscuous approach to child development fails, they have reserved the privilege of labeling the child as a victim of a brain disorder.

If you leave a child to function as if his independence and dominance were a viable option, you are not loving the child; you are allowing him to march blindly into certain destruction—not to mention the harm he causes to others along the way.

Do not allow 15 seconds to lapse between the offense and the spanking. And do not allow more than 10 feet between the place of the offense and the place of spanking. The association is essential.

Sue has adopted a false worldview. It is a narrow, blind, and selfish endeavor that offers false hope and empty pleasure. To allow her to continue on this path without meeting a greater power is to allow her to continue to believe a lie that will damn her soul. Those who set aside goodwill and adopt a will to dominate are enemies of God and of the fellowship of humanity.

Fear God and the king

When adults or children choose the wrong path they must be brought to repentance. Modern, Christian psychology with its feather-pillow tactics will not work. Sue and other children like her need to come smack dab up against the fear of God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Jesus said, *“I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him (Luke 12:5).”* Modern Christianity has had the fear of God driven out of it by counselors, motivational preachers, praise music, and

Christian bookstores. Sue is too young to fear God, but properly placed fear is essential to mental and spiritual health. Sue needs to fear her parents as Christians fear God. I am not talking about fear of a spanking, nor fear of their presence, but rather, she should fear the authority they command.

When the rod fails

Dear Mother, as we said, you cannot depend on spanking Sue into compliance. Do not fail to spank, but don't expect it to work until you have made some other adjustments. And when you do spank, make sure that it is forceful enough to get her undivided attention. If she can scream “huggie” while you are spanking her, you are probably not spanking hard enough.

Do not allow 15 seconds to lapse between the offense and the spanking. And do not allow more than 10 feet between the place of the offense and the place of spanking. The association is essential. Don't hug her in reference to the spanking. That is an apology, and it is a diversion from the issues. Again, spanking will not be the deciding factor, but it will help keep the pressure on.

The Key to Victory

The key is to cut off all her attempts to sabotage your authority. When she draws a line and sets herself against your command, **never**, I say **never**, allow her to win. She is looking for opportunities to prove her independence and sovereignty. You need to look for opportunities to demonstrate your sovereign governorship. She must be thwarted by a superior power. So far, she has been stronger than you.

When you tighten up, she will bear down with her most defiant anger and hostility. Out of desperation, she will try every trick that has ever worked. You do not have to win the battle all at once. You just have to win every contest she throws at you.

A plan

Put the bed back in her room. Explain to her that she is going to sleep in it all night. Make a list of things you will do before bedtime. Each evening, check off the list with her, and when it is concluded there will be no more repeats. This list will be helpful because you have been allowing her to set the agenda spontaneously, whereas by writing it down, you are making her aware that you have an agenda from which you will not vary, and it is her responsibility to do the conforming. Place a glass of water in her room, and also a little potty. Let her watch the clock with you. When the hand gets to the bedtime hour, you will kiss her good night and leave the room. Do not answer any more questions, and do not respond except with a switch, in the event she breaks any of the rules. If she gets up to potty, there had better be yellow liquid in the pot, or she gets another switching.

Do not threaten to spank her until she stops crying. For some children that would work, but you do not want to challenge her to a contest that you cannot win. She may be able to tolerate the pain longer than you can tolerate giving it. Once she outcries the switch, she will keep on doing so, stretching her endurance longer and longer each time. You can harden a child to your ultimatums by allowing her to win the switching-or-else contest. The point is to win any objective contests she initiates. You can't make her stop crying, but you can stand over her and make sure she does not get out of the bed. You don't have to spank excessively. Your goal is to get her to "voluntarily" return to the bed.

You can get an intercom and mount it high on the wall so you can hear everything that goes on in her room. Don't let her know that her room is bugged. If you can't get the intercom, you may have to sleep outside her room. If she gets out of bed, go in there, and without saying a word, give her one or two licks—

whatever it takes to get her back in bed. If she rushes to obey when she hears you coming, give her five licks anyway.

Do not drag her to the bed. It is important that she exercise her own will to obey. If she throws a screaming fit, give her several moderate licks every few minutes and wait beside her until she is so tired she obeys. Do this all night long, every night, until she readily complies.

If she puts her shoes on backwards, do not threaten or complain, just commence giving her licks right on her feet or ankles until she gets her shoes on the right feet. If she takes her shoes off in the yard, do not warn her, just go out in the yard and spank her feet until she finds her shoes and puts them back on.

Now above all, to make this effective, you must always maintain the dignity of a judge. You cannot be stressed or emotionally upset. She has been winning the emotional battle—a field you must conquer if you are to win the larger game. Pretend to be indifferent to her suffering at the end of the switch. You must always be calm and deliberate.

Lastly, you should reward all good behavior with lots of smiles and participation. Spend time enjoying her when she is in a state of goodwill. Try to keep her in a state of fellowship and participation at all

times. Make it difficult for her to turn against the pleasure of fellowship and to sink into a bad mood.

Fellowship

When you take away a twisted pleasure, like the will to dominate, give her something to replace it. Fellowship and group cooperation is a powerfully stabilizing factor. Don't allow your child to get bored. Be sure to wear a smile that comes from your heart. Look in your child's face and show delight and satisfaction. Establish the child in a mental pleasure that is more pleasurable than the will to dominate.

Consistency

Be consistent. Repeat the former sentence 25 times and then diagram it. ☺

Michael,

Thank you for sending the newsletter to me. It hit home. The letter told me I was evil for getting caught up in the porn. What a harsh slap in the face. How I needed to hear it. I realize now that my secret sins were affecting my family as well as separating me from the Lord. I am thankful that someone is willing to shoot from the hip and be frank. I know God will be very frank with me one day.

I have been free for three days now. Not that long of a time but I can already tell a huge difference in my outlook and my relationship with my God. My prayer life has opened up and I feel much cleaner inside. Please pray for me. I don't want to go back. I can't go back.

Dear Michael and Debi,

Boy, I don't even know where to begin! But, let me start out by saying that my first reaction to the porn headlines was "I can't get away from it anywhere!" My husband and I have been married for almost 11 years. He has had a serious problem with it for almost 40 years. He hid it quite well from me until about five years ago when he finally confessed.

I'm in tears as I write this. You spoke to him in a way NONE of our Pastors has done, not anybody else. **THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT HE NEEDS TO HEAR FROM ANOTHER MAN.**

I cannot thank you enough for this article. If people are offended, it's because THEY don't have a clue as to what it's like. You said it best when you said, "The letters we receive are from homeschooling, no birth control, go to church, **PUT ON A GOOD FRONT** families.

Our church has many men who struggle with this problem. In the past my husband has tried to get out of it. Unfortunately at this moment he is choosing to enjoy what he thinks is pleasure.

Thank you for having the courage and the boldness to tell these men the truth. I'm still crying as I write this. There is little help for wives but you are helping. Your letter was full of words he has needed to hear for a very long time and no man has had the courage to say it.

I can assure you, many wives have been helped and you will reach many husbands. D

Mr. Pearl,

Your most recent news-letter had some of the most difficult to respond to and convicting "adult" information I have come across in a long time. And I will have my 12-year-old son read it. The sober description and rebuke to moral sin was deeply moving and convicting to me over the immoral thoughts I do not always submit to Christ for forgiveness and restoration. You have done the Christian community a great service by being direct, incisive and descriptive. My deep gratitude,

A brother

FROM OUR MAILBOX

Dear Pearls,

I know you won't have time to answer this, but I just wanted to send a note of encouragement. I shared your pornography article with a forum of homeschooling ladies, and several of them e-mailed me privately to let me know that they had really been encouraged, and had really needed hearing that right now. One lady just yesterday discovered her husband was into Internet porn. So sad...I've been there, done that. Praise the Lord that HE heals and our marriage is a better than ever now.

God Bless Mama T

Dear Pearls,

Thank you for your boldness in your last newsletter when you addressed the issue of pornography. It was just what my husband needed. I asked him to read it and he did. He was so moved by it that he immediately went outside put his face to the ground in repentance asking for salvation and deliverance from his terrible secret sin. He has been transformed because you had the guts to tell it like it is. I'm sure that we are not the only ones who are grateful for what you are doing but I just had to write and tell you how much you mean to us. God used you to "get to us" and life has been better for it! God bless you for your teaching, encouragement, and wisdom. Thank you again for standing up for the truth of God's WORD.

A Thankful Wife,

Dear Pearls, Your last newsletter really opened my eyes to what a great husband I have. Suddenly, incorrect grammar and dirty socks don't seem so bad!
DR

Dear Michael and Debi,

I was relieved to see you address pornography in your newsletter. What a painful subject for women. I found a stack of magazines in my third year of marriage. I cannot tell you how devastated I was then or how I continue to reel from my discovery. I confronted him, to his shame. As far as I know he quit cold turkey that day, yet I continue to mistrust him. I have no reason for it. He is a good husband, provider, lover, friend, companion, leader, and father. I always wonder if how I look satisfies him. I have had four children and continue to be the same size as I was in high school. I am obsessed about staying thin for fear he will be unsatisfied with me. I struggle on a continual basis since finding his magazines, several years ago. I would concur with your reader who considers pornography an affair. I cannot express it in words, for this discovery rocked my world. I could not share this with a soul. I have read up enough to know that cold turkey is the best way to treat this addiction.

My husband has lamented that he cannot believe how many years he wasted on porn. How he could have done more with his life, instead of holed up in a room, alone.

I often struggle with the bedroom issue and how this discovery has blasted my entire view of myself. One cannot compete against touched-up photos, a person who had nothing else to do with their life than to 'get pretty', or for that matter one who has not had children. I give freely in the bedroom. I never considered otherwise. Once our pastor's wife said, "Ladies, you are a little fool if you do not treat sex as a number one need in your spouses' life." I concur.

I am also reminded of the reaction of my girlfriends over the years who told me of their husband's addictions. All of them have had plastic surgery.

I lament again, that my husband's addiction has been and continues to be painful to me. I have never caught him or found anything since. I am always looking and checking and playing detective, wondering. Every now and then, I tell him how devastated I have been and how I always wonder what he's thinking or what secrets he is keeping. He lovingly touches my head and says, "I know babe, I know." I hate what pornography has done to a good relationship. I hate that this marred his soul. I hate that I was so dumb as to not see it for the first three years of our marriage. I hate that I wonder what he is doing when I leave or when he tarries too long in a room, etc. I hate that I am always suspicious. Honestly, what kind of peace is that?

I wonder if the children of a pornography freak are destined for the same course? How do I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he is not back into porn? How do I know this will not ruin my family or enter my home again? I have so much devastation and mistrust. I was never ever exposed to this growing up. My father never had this problem. I carry my secret alone, and for the last several years it has been a lot to bear.

A Wife

Dear Michael and Debi,

Two weeks ago while vacationing in west central Minnesota we attended church in the small town of Wolverton. A couple and their seven children were a few rows ahead of us.

I must admit I was slightly distracted during the sermon as I pondered the phenomenon unfolding before me, for throughout the service there was not a sound out of the children. There was some normal movement but nothing noisy or in any way bothersome. Occasionally a parent would glance over the row or make eye contact with a child, with a pleasant look, or with the touch of a gentle hand on a small one's head or arm. It was beautiful to watch. At the end of the service I introduced myself to the father and complimented him on his remarkably behaved children. He thanked me and said what a joy the children were to him. When I asked he said, "Well, actually we came across a book a couple years ago called *To Train Up A Child* by the Pearls. I should have known! My niece had bought a copy for me last fall and I was very impressed with it too. The father went on to say that before they used the Pearl's method their children were "wild." Now he said the kids are so much happier and more content than before. The ages of the children were from under 1 to 15 years with 5 of them being under 6 years of age! And the whole family had just returned from a month's vacation traveling and camping, and it was pleasant and peaceful—even the days that were mostly spent driving all day in their van. Isn't that refreshing? I was so blessed, and knew you'd like to hear this story too.

Sincerely, Elisabeth

Elisabeth, we could believe the first part about sitting still in church, but that part about 5 children under 6 years of age, all in a van for days, and it was peaceful all the time. We have made a lot of claims in our writings, but we can't take credit for anything that incredible. Did you watch his eyes when he made that claim? Did he put his hand in front of his mouth or pull on his ear?

The Church at Cane Creek
1000 PEARL ROAD
PLEASANTVILLE, TN 37033

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