

# NGJ

*No Greater Joy*

MARCH - APRIL 2004

"I HAVE NO GREATER JOY THAN  
TO HEAR THAT MY CHILDREN  
WALK IN TRUTH." III JOHN 4

Of Utmost Concern  
Another Generation  
The Two-brained Kid  
Sound Familiar?  
One size fits all?  
Prisoners Freed  
Ode to Garlic  
Child Labor

CHILD TRAINING • HOMESCHOOLING • FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS • BIBLE TEACHING

All Scripture taken from  
the Authorized Version  
(King James) Holy Bible

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No Greater Joy  
Ministries Inc.  
1000 Pearl Road  
Pleasantville, TN 37033

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## Another Generation . . . . . 4

by Michael Pearl

*All of life was designed to bring us to this time. Deb and I have reached the reaping stage of life, and the fruit is sweet beyond belief. Our children rise up and call us blessed—if you can wring it out of them—and we still get to have input into the next generation.*



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by Michael Pearl

*When your child can relax in your presence, then, and only then, can you train him in obedience that leads to character. When your relationship gets confrontational, the only thing you can communicate is that you are tougher than he is.*

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*There are a few of the inmates that I would rank with the greatest men of God I have ever known. Some are students of the word of God, excelling seminary graduates.*

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*I have had no official training in healthcare; however, my mother is a midwife and herbalist, and I learned much from her during my homeschool years on the Tennessee farm.*

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*Dad always had a mischievous habit of asking visiting children (of all ages) a question: "Hey little man, what do you do for a living?"*

## Sound Familiar? . . . . . 10

by Rebekah Joy Anast

*So many things in life are traumatizing because of the cold-turkey manner in which they are introduced. School can either be a frequent time of quality interaction and fun with a parent or sibling, or it can be a designated time of tension and stress.*

## One size fits all? . . . . . 20

Q&A with Michael Pearl

*Not all children can be trained equally with the same techniques. If what you're doing is not working, you are either not consistent or there is some other piece of the puzzle that is missing.*

# of utmost concern

(first printed in 1995)

I think most of you feel as I do about many common issues. My most important personal concern is my children. Even before I was married, my occupation, financial security, ministry, personal fulfillment, all took third place to concerns for my future children. “*What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*” Likewise, what does it profit a father if he gains the whole world and loses the souls of his children?



Pearl family in 1991

What can be called success if your children turn out to be part of the world’s problem rather than its cure? What satisfaction can there be in the comforts of material success if your children grow up needing counsel rather than being sought after to give counsel? If your children lie awake at night suffering from guilt and anxiety, being gnawed upon by the demons of intemperance and self-indulgence, how can you enjoy your food or your pillow?

The success of a tree and a man is measured by the fruit that is borne. The fruit of a man or woman is their children; everything else is falling leaves.

If the sun rises and sets and I never cast a bigger shadow, what of it, if my children are growing and flourishing in God’s family?

Let me die poor; let me die early; let me be ravaged by disease; just let my children rise

up and call me blessed. Let me not measure my giving by the dollars I spend on them or the educational opportunities that my station in life affords them, but rather, by the hours I spend with them in fellowship.

May they graduate from my tutorship to become disciples of the Man from Nazareth. May they learn good and evil from the pinnacle of obedience rather than from the pit of despair. May they have the wisdom to choose the precious, and the courage to reject the trite and the vain things in life. May they always labor for the *meat* that endures.

May they be lovers of God, coworkers with the Holy Spirit, and a friend to the Lord Jesus. And when their trail ends, may it end at the throne of God, laying crowns at the Savior’s feet. ❖

# another generation

Just the other day, Deb discovered the article “Of Utmost Concern,” written 9 years ago, back when we first started the No Greater Joy publication. When she read it to me, she wept with joy and thanksgiving, and, I must admit, I teared up, too. None of our children were married then.

Our youngest, Shoshanna, was 9 years old, just a skinny little kid, talking our ears off and seeing how much work she would put off on her older sisters. Rebekah, the oldest, was just beginning her training and preparation to be a linguist and translate Scripture. Shalom was 11, still a child learning to cook, keep house, and obey her parents. The boys were 14 and 16. They were working hard in construction, and we were concerned as to whether they had gotten enough homeschooling. Nathan couldn't spell, and Gabriel couldn't stop bragging. And both of them were discovering that the world was full of soft, warm, and lovely creatures of the opposite sex. Our house felt like a hormone factory. At one point, they were both sweet on the same girl. I think that was the year Gabriel killed 56 squirrels in the first five days of the season—had to clean every one of them—and never wanted to kill another one. From then on, it was deer and elk he hunted.

Wherever we went, people bragged on our “obedient” and “good-natured” children, and we were proud of them. We trusted and often repeated the promise, *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old,*

*he will not depart from it”* (Proverbs 22:6). We were approaching the finish line with the oldest, and in ten years they would all be complete. Most of the training had been done on the three oldest. From there on, it was a matter of keeping them on course, helping them face each new crisis with wisdom and faith in God's care. I must admit that there were times when our confidence would be shaken.

You think you know a lot about child training until they get to be teenagers, and then you realize that no one knows anything about teenagers. They know everything, and you are just an old fogey who has never been in love and never wanted to run with the wind and discover new worlds. They will readily admit that you don't understand them, and then the girls will cry and tell you that they don't understand themselves. The boys get aggressive and try to dominate their mothers, and the girls start shutting the bedroom door and brooding up new incoherencies. At that point, you have to maintain fellowship and be patient, trusting to the grace of God and the training you gave them before they got to the “omniscient” stage.

The hardest part for parents has



Pearl children, 1988



Shoshanna and Shalom Pearl, 1987



Gabriel Pearl, 1988

always been learning the precise, “safest” moment to turn loose. Their teen years are a time of transfer. You trained them to be adults, and now they are in such a hurry to try it out. At twelve, they are little children, and at seventeen or eighteen, they are adults. That is just five or six years—the longest, most extraordinary metamorphosis ever to occur in nature. You can’t fight it, can’t stop it, and had better not get in its way, because it will happen with or without you. It is as though the first twelve years is your God-designed, optimal opportunity to determine what kind of winged creature is going to emerge from the cocoon of their youth. Their wings are delicate, and they are still vulnerable, and if you try to hold them too tightly, you can cripple them emotionally and socially.



Rebekah

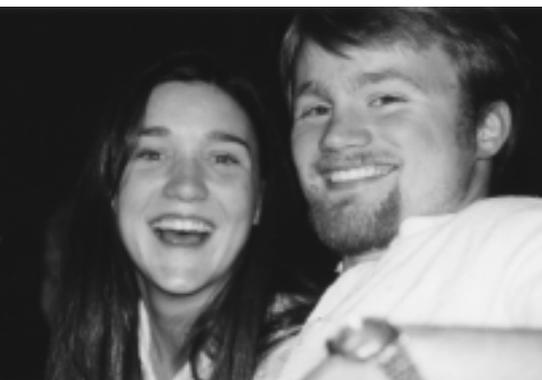
Shoshanna

Shalom

knew how he kept his mother and me adjusting our methods and our reactions to his behavior. It is almost like boxing or dancing: Child training demands that you be alert, and it keeps you on your toes.

Well, here we sit ten years later, our children all grown. All are worshipers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are all a delight to us and many others. I can testify that all our hopes have been fulfilled. The house is now full of grand-kids and pregnant daughters and daughters-in-law. Toys once again litter the floors. There are fresh colored-marker scrawls on the floors and walls. Highchairs, strollers, and little tricycles fill up the nooks and crannies around our home. Our vehicles have child-restraining seats permanently installed. There is a swing-set in the yard, along with a well-used trampoline. I will be back splashing in the creek this year, again teaching little ones to swim. Yes, God is good. . . all the time! Life is a gift to be enjoyed with thanksgiving. All these children and grandchildren are the fruit of our love—and God’s love! Deb and I have reached the reaping stage of life, and the fruit is sweet beyond belief. All of life was designed to bring us to this time. Our

children rise up and call us blessed—if you can wring it out of them—and we still get to have input into the next generation. But, thank God, they take the kids home at night. They carry the load; we just smile a lot, remembering our days of carrying the load, and try hard not to spoil the grandchildren. ❖



Shalom and Justin

My son Nathan, with one child and another on the way, said to me the other day, “I have discovered that this child training thing is not as simple and formulated as I thought it was; it is very fluid. You have to constantly make adjustments in accordance with the changes in the child.” I couldn’t agree with him more. If he only



Zephyr

Laura Rose

Nathan

# WE NEED YOU TO BE AARONS & HURS

URGENT!



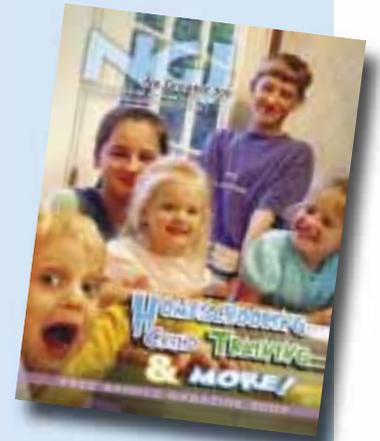
There is a grand old story about the children of God in Exodus 17. An army called the Amalekites came against Israel. When Moses saw the enemy, he told his young helper, Joshua, to choose special men, and go out and fight. He told him, "While your army is fighting, I will stand on top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand." So Joshua took the army out, and Moses went up on the hill with two men, Aaron and Hur. When Moses held his hand up, the Israelites prevailed. But when his arms grew heavy and he could no longer hold them up, the enemy prevailed. So Aaron and Hur stood on either side of Moses and supported his tired arms. As they did so, Israel prevailed, and Joshua and the army of God were able to defeat the enemy that came against them. In recognition of that victory, Moses made an altar to God called *Jehovanissi*, which means "banner of God."

Deb and I and our seven coworkers here at No Greater Joy Ministries are like old Moses. As families fight against the world and the flesh to raise godly children, we stand on a hill and intercede to God. We hold up a ministry that God has used to minister to tens of thousands of families. As Moses needed help, we need your help. We need Aarons and Hurs to hold up our arms so that God can continue to minister to more and more families. First, pray for us. Pray for our health, wisdom and courage to keep on keeping. Then introduce this ministry to young new families. You know families that are struggling and need some direction. Be an Aaron and Hur, a co-minister to help them grow in grace and knowledge. It would cost us a lot in advertising to reach them, but you can do it at no cost. The ministry is still growing, but not fast enough to reach all of the young new families struggling along in dismay.

We have printed a special, full-color, glossy, 10-page sample of the No Greater Joy magazine as a way to introduce effective child training and heavenly marriage relationships to as many young families as possible.

Our arms grow weary. We need strong new families to join in so that the battle can continue to be won until the last family is reached.

Drop a postcard or email us at [nogreaterjoy@direcway.com](mailto:nogreaterjoy@direcway.com) with the number of as many free sample newsletters as you can use and where to send them.



We need you to aggressively help us win this battle for God. Here are some ways you can minister to others through this **FREE** sample magazine:

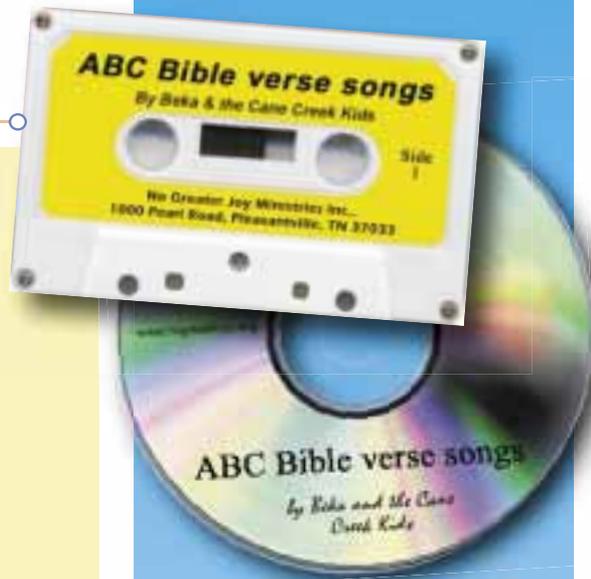
- Set out a stack of them in the church foyer. Give a bundle to your friends and relatives to take to their churches.
- Make a special effort to go to your homeschool group meeting, taking a bundle with you.
- Provide them to organizations like MOPS.
- Bring a bundle to women's meetings and church daycares. Leave a few in your doctor's office waiting room.
- Military families can have them for new arrivals on the base.
- For anyone exhibiting at homeschool conventions and book fairs, have a stack available at your table. ☺
- Just mail to friends and family.

# NEW TAPE!

## ABC Bible songs!

Our daughter, Rebekah, and her family recently came to visit for three weeks. While she was here, she got some of the kids in the church together and taught them the A-B-C Bible verse songs that her mother taught her when she was growing up. I must admit that Rebekah has made a few modifications that improved the overall musical quality of these 26 Bible tunes. Leah Sargent plays the violin and sings, Jacob Madill plays the guitar; Rebekah plays the piano, and one of the kids is shaking a jar full of popcorn. Deborah Sargent, Abigail Sargent and Hanna Madill are harmonizing. Carolyn Beachy, age 9, sings solo beautifully. Joseph Courage, 2 ½ years old, sings with his daddy. Ryshoni, 6 months, contributes her part with squeaks and squeals. Your little ones will want to listen to this day and night, and by doing so they will learn 26 Bible verses, with the references.

This is the smilingest tapes you will ever hear. If you can get past the first song without smiling from ear to ear, I will give you a 5-year subscription to *No Greater Joy* publication and a fresh barrel of lard. Just notify me, with the signature of one additional witness, testifying that you did not smile, and we will respond immediately by shipping your misery award. Your name will be posted on our website so you will get the notoriety you deserve.



The recording quality is digitally excellent and available in tape or CD for just \$5.00, plus S&H.  
Tape 1010-40  
Cassette 1010-45



## SPECIAL DISCOUNT

For a short time only, until May 1, we are making available to you a special discount on the book *To Train up a Child*. You can purchase 8 copies for just \$16.00, plus S&H. That is just \$2.00 per book. We are doing this as a form of advertisement, knowing that you will be giving the books away to someone who doesn't have a copy and who will benefit from reading it. *There is a limit of only 8 books at this price.* The offer will end May 1, so order right now, for you know how you are about putting something off, thinking you will do it later, but somehow never get around to it until it is too late.

8 To Train up a Child Set \$16.00 AD04-MAYSP

# ode to garlic

I lived and worked among the Kumboi people in the highlands of Papua New Guinea during 1997-1998. I was the first white person they had ever seen. They affectionately named me “mbiny kuloi ai yande,” the albino daughter. I spent most of my time there alone except for a couple of visits from my younger brother, “mba kuloi,” the albino boy. I was there to teach literacy and compile a translation of the New Testament in their language, but healthcare inevitably took up some of my time. I have had no official training in healthcare; however, my mother was a midwife and herbalist, and I learned much from her during my homeschool years on the Tennessee farm.

The main health problems in those mountains were infections of all sorts, from skin boils and abscessed wounds to lung conditions like pneumonia—and of course, malaria. Rather than destroy their precariously built immune systems with antibiotics, I planted a huge garlic garden and explored the uses of that smelly herb. The village ladies were enthusiastic. We tried everything from garlic poultices on external infections and internal doses for parasites (we also used pumpkin seeds for that), to enemas (what a job explaining the civilized reasoning behind enemas!) for pretty much everything. They were instructed how to use a clove in the ear for ear infections, hot-garlic chest poultices for lung infections, a few drops of diluted garlic water on an infected umbilical cord and a warm washcloth saturated with diluted garlic water on

the baby’s belly. Mothers were taught the benefits of using garlic poultices on general infections, and how the ingesting of garlic by mothers could help prevent any afterbirth infections due to prolapsed uterus, etc.

**I cannot give garlic all the credit for the success we had; I’m certain that God, as usual, was working miracles for some of the cases we faced that we might not otherwise have had either the skill or knowledge to treat properly.** But the most encouraging thing about the use of garlic in rural conditions is that, when I left that village, I did not take my medical care with me; it remained there in a little aromatic patch in the middle of those thatched huts and has continued to heal a multitude of diseases.

## Kumboi Birth Traditions

Among the highland Kumboi people in Papua New Guinea, a woman in labor must leave the village and go to a banana patch some distance from the village. A sister will accompany her and build a crude shelter to keep them out of the rain. The baby is born on banana leaves and kept outside the village with the mother for about two weeks, or until the cord has dried up and the mother’s bleeding has stopped. There are many taboos that go along with this primitive ritual: foods the mother may not eat, gardens she may not enter for at least three months, and people she may not talk to.

Birthing in the banana patch is mainly for the purpose of keeping the mess outside of the village, and it

also serves to give the baby a better chance to avoid infections from the chickens and pigs that run around the village. As soon as the baby is born, the midwife/sister takes it to a cold mountain stream and washes it in the frigid water. Together with the high altitude and the mothers’ lack of understanding about the need for warm clothing for infants, babies are often subjected to cold and are much more susceptible to sickness, leading to premature death in far too many cases. If the child lives as long as two years, it is finally given a name, because the chances of long-term survival are now much greater. ❖



For more information on herbs and a free catalog, write to The Bulk Herb Store, 1010 Pearl Rd, Pleasantville, TN 37033. *Please do not send herbal questions to No Greater Joy Ministries.* The two companies are not related and have different addresses.

Ode to Garlic © by No Greater Joy Ministries.

# Homeschool Kid

## The Wins of Change

Behind Mom and Dad's door stood an old, five-gallon plastic jug, the origin of which I have long forgotten. Every time Dad had a pocketful of small change, he would toss it into the jug behind the door. The five of us Pearl kids kept the corners of the house, the laundry room, and even the street in front of the library well-scoured for pennies and nickels to add to that old jug. It usually took about 6 months to get that jug about half full.

Finally, when we were convinced there was enough in there to make a difference, the three oldest of us would haul the jug to the table, heave it up, and dump it out. The shower of dirty change onto the table was a thrill I still vividly remember.

Mom would hand us the bag of brown paper rolls from the bank, and the counting would begin. Even three-year-old Shalom climbed up on the bench and counted out pennies. Nathan recounted her stacks, and Gabe would recount Nathan's. And I, being the oldest, had to recount every stack just to make sure.

The first counting session was always a little disappointing. Our hopes were generally higher than the pile of change. But by the second or third counting, we triumphantly arrived at a figure that would take the whole family to Baskin & Robbins for a banana split - EACH!

Looking back, I can't see much value in all the banana



splits that once thrilled my heart, but counting that change, and the recounting, and re-recounting... was more valuable to my basic math skills than all my ABEKA math workbooks put together. Twenty years later I can count a handful of change at a glance.

-Rebekah Joy Anast

## ONE HAPPY FAMILY!

Dear Mike and Debi,

You've turned our family into celebrities! We have four children (ages 5, 4, and almost-3-year-old twins) and we are talked about everywhere we go. "You could make money teaching people how to get their kids to act like that!" "How do you get them to sit still like that?" "You have the most well-behaved children I have ever seen." "Are your kids drugged?" My husband and I love "To Train Up A Child" and are guiding people to your website and handing out your books. We are so happy! Our kids are fun, they make us laugh, and they help their Mommy and Daddy, they are polite, and they are ROWDY and CRAZY, too! We love it!

Sincerely,

Andy and Michelle

## POETIC JUSTICE :)

Sir,

I am a missionary preparing for service church-planting in a tribal area of Africa. I have recently found your daughter's diary and some other magazines about child-raising. Also, some negative comments from some on the internet. I simply want to add my word of encouragement and blessing to faithfully proclaiming wise, biblical, experienced, America-building, kid-controlling principles. May you never tire of the battle, and may detractors be punished by shopping in stores with those parents and kids who disregard your message. For the Kingdom,

SM

# *sound familiar?*

## Sally and Jimmy

There's a little girl in my neighborhood who is six years old. Her mother has carefully guarded the girl's childhood from the stress of early learning requirements. She believes that school should not be forced upon a child's happy youth until social expectations demand it. Sally recognizes her name when it's written down, but cannot write it herself; nor can she read another word. The very thought of starting school this year is a source of great fear and anxiety for the little girl. Were you to ask Sally if she can read, her face would lose its usual animation, to become clouded with doubt.

During the summer, Sally's three-year-old cousin, Jimmy, came to visit her for a month. As soon as he entered her house, little Jimmy headed straight for the bookcase. He passed by the half-dressed Barbie dolls, the pile of cartoon videos, and even the sing-along record player. He pulled a stack of dusty books off of Sally's shelf and sat down in the middle of her floor. She stood about three feet away and watched him pensively. What?! was written all over her face. Jimmy quickly went through the pile of five or six books. He tossed three of them behind him in disfavor before settling on a dinosaur book. Jimmy opened the book and looked up at his cousin curiously. "You wanna read with me?" he asked

her cheerfully. She looked dubious. "Can you read?" She asked. "Yep, I can read." He assured her. "No, he can't." came the voice of Sally's mother from the kitchen. "He just thinks he can." "I can read!" insisted Jimmy, without losing his good-natured composure. His confidence was not the least bit swayed. Sally hoped her Mother was wrong. If Jimmy could read... maybe there was hope for Sally! She sat down beside him. Jimmy smiled at her and pointed to the first page.

"'D' is for dinosaur... there's the 'D.' And there's the dinosaur. He's a Brach . . . brach. . . brachodino-saurus. He's a good dinosaur. He doesn't eat the other dinosaurs; he eats his broccoli like a good boy." Sally stared at Jimmy in wonder. She knew that what Jimmy was reading sounded different than the first time she had heard the book read to her. But it was also strikingly similar, and possibly, more interesting. Jimmy read the whole book to her. He pointed out alphabet sounds and characters regularly. When he finished, Sally turned to find her mother sitting in a chair behind them, listening.

"Did he really read it?" she asked her mother. Sally's mother looked at Jimmy for a few seconds. There was a funny expression on her face. Finally, she nodded. "Yes, he read it pretty well, all right." Sally smiled.

## **Moral**

The moral of this story is that familiarity gives confidence. Whether Jimmy could read or not wasn't even the issue. Jimmy's confidence, and Sally's lack of it, was the issue. Reading was not an unknown fear that lay ahead of Jimmy. It was a familiar area of progress. He could look back in his memory and recall learning to recognize that "D" is for dinosaur. He could recall dozens of books that he read at home with his daddy, until he could quote them by heart. He could remember Mama helping him draw "A" is for Alligator all over a sheet of paper with a red crayon. If Jimmy, at three years of age, and Sally at six, had both started school the next day; who do you think would have the advantage?

## **Cold Turkey**

So many things in life are traumatizing because of the cold-turkey manner in which they are introduced: potty-training, musical instruments, work and chores, reading, writing, math, cooking, etc... Children who hate school are usually children who never experienced learning as fun. School can either be a frequent time of quality interaction and fun with a parent or sibling; or, it can be a designated time of tension and stress. When it becomes a time when the student is required

to perform for the parent and meet their expectations or a time when they experience disappointment and shame by failure, it's no wonder that they hate school!

Imagine having your private parts covered and warm in a diaper your whole life. Suddenly, when you turn two years old, someone strips you bare and places you over a large empty place, big enough to fall into. They tell you that from now on, you have to do your business over that big yawning hole. Your stomach is in knots; you couldn't pee if your bladder was bursting. But, what if, from the time you were tiny, you watched your mama sit on that big hole and heard the tinkle, tinkle? Sometimes she lifted you up in front of her and said "peepee." Sometimes she took off your diaper and dribbled warm water down your belly while you sat there and applauded when you peed. Finally, when you learned to toddle to the bathroom on your own, the transition from diapers to potty seat would be a breeze.

## Conclusion:

Learning is not a race that you begin when the gun goes off and the flag comes down. Nor can one ever say, "I'm finished learning now. The race is over. I won. Or, I lost. I'm done."

Learning will go on as long as life does. Life is a sponge, and knowledge is a liquid. As parents, our desire is to make life as absorbent as possible, and spill knowledge all over the place. Start now...*today*. Whatever you do, let your child do it with you. Teach dishwashing, tub scrubbing, and floor sweeping. And most importantly, keep soaking up your own puddles of knowledge as you go.

God says it like this: *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little* (Isa. 28:10).



# Hearts & Hugs

When Gabe grabs me for a bear hug and kiss, little Joe Courage laughs and hugs my leg in an effort to be part of the give and take. It's "love-on-Mama time," and little Joe is learning from his dad how to do it right. "You're soooo happy, Mama," he tells me while I'm joyfully soaking in all the attention. He's a perceptive little tyke. I'm soooo happy! Ryshoni Joy (nine months) starts squeaking and yelling too, trying to be part of the huddle, and Daddy leans over and picks her up. She lays her head against his beard and coos in the same tone she hears coming from me. Rysha is learning to be a happy mama.



Some things are better caught than taught.  
Love is one of them.  
-Rebekah Joy Anast

## ► NOTICE ◀

If you are a young man with ministry gifts, called to preach the word of God to those who have never heard, No Greater Joy Ministries recommends an opportunity to launch your overseas ministry. For the summer, you will assist two full-time missionaries in Ukraine—Jessie Beal and Joshua Steele. The people there are friendly to missionaries and wide open to the gospel. You will live with a Ukrainian family, where you will be immersed in the culture and language. Through an interpreter, you will preach on the street, in schools, and in churches that are already established.

Joshua was the coordinator of Nations Training Institute in Bangkok this year. Two married students are continuing with the prison ministry in Bangkok, but the school will be discontinued. However, as Joshua returns to Ukraine, some of the young men are going with him. If you would like to join them in Ukraine for the summer, contact Joshua immediately.

His email address is:  
[joshua\\_m\\_steele@yahoo.com](mailto:joshua_m_steele@yahoo.com)

# prisoners freed

*Skeptics speak of “jail house religion”. There is such a thing, but it is no different than “church house religion,” and probably has a better average of permanence.*

**Y**ou may have heard me mention that my favorite ministry is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the inmates at a nearby state prison. There is nothing to compare to it. I started preaching in prisons and jails 40 years ago, when I was 18 years old. It gets old trying to convince nice homeschoolers that they are sinners and need to repent toward God if they are to receive his blessings, but most guys in prison know that they are helpless sinners. About 60 to 80 men come to the chapel every Saturday morning for 90 minutes to hear me teach the Word of God—no holds barred, no punches pulled. It would shock you to hear me speak to them. I think that I owe much of my frankness to having worked in this kind of ministry all of my life. An inmate walks up to me and asks, “Will you write a letter to the parole board and recommend that I be released?” I answer, “I don’t know if you need to be released or not. As long as you’re in here, I can preach to you; but if you got out, I might have to shoot you, so I’ll just leave it to God and the authorities to decide.” They laugh and slap me on the back, understanding full well that I care about them, but that what I say may be true, in some cases.

Some of them are murderers, rapists, bank robbers, drug dealers, wife killers, child molesters, and all of the crimes you read about. But I only know them as brothers in Christ, saints of God, new creatures in Christ Jesus. I tell them not to tell me what they did to get in the slammer. When shut up in a room, surrounded by 60 convicts, with no guards and no electronic monitoring, I don’t feel any more threatened or intimidated than

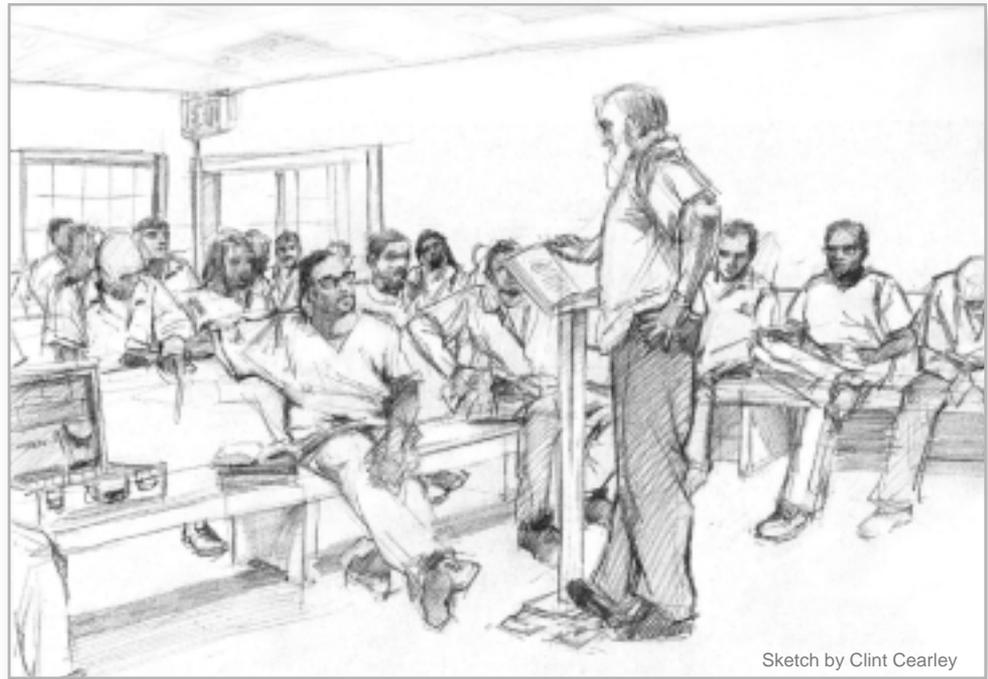
I do at a homeschool fair. The men who are saved are as gentle and as just as the apostles of Christ. There are a few of them that I would rank with the greatest men of God I have ever known. Some are students of the word of God, excelling seminary graduates.

Almost every week, one of them is released into the free world, and every week there are new guys coming into the bible study for the first time, looking around apprehensively, having decided to “give God a try”. Every week is a challenge. There are guys hearing the gospel for the first time, and there are guys with extraordinary minds and spirits, who are instantly ready to give me the chapter and verse reference that I cannot remember. All I need to do is recall a word or two, and someone knows the location of the verse.

Skeptics speak of “jail house religion”. There is such a thing, but it is no different from “church house religion”, and probably has a better average of permanence. The Church at Cane Creek is composed of about fifteen men, four or five of whom are ex-convicts. Several of the men who have gotten out of prison are now going back into prisons to minister the gospel. Some of the men who were released are now pastors of churches; others are successful, honest, businessmen. One man who has done 23 years, nine of them sitting under my ministry, will be released next month. His

I need your help. I am not asking for money. Send me your quality King James Bibles. These guys would be proud to own a quality used Bible.

**About 60 to 80 men come to the chapel every Saturday morning for 90 minutes to hear me teach the word of God -- no holds barred, no punches pulled.**



Sketch by Clint Cearley

children are grown, but his wife has waited on him all this time. They will be reunited, and he will start a new life to match his new soul. I have no doubt that he will be the same man of God out in the free world that he has been in the pen.

Some of the men to whom I have ministered have been killed by other inmates. Others have died of disease or old age. Some have been transferred to other facilities where they carry on, teaching the same gospel that I taught them. One inmate, a big black man of very high intelligence, was transferred to a maximum security facility. Like Daniel, he has so won the confidence of the staff, that they have permitted him to teach a Bible class every day. I recently received a letter from him telling me that, so far, 7 of the guards and the warden have been saved, along with many fellow inmates. For the many years that he was under my teaching, he studied the Bible all the way through every year—not just read....studied....with helps and aids. He was learning Greek when he transferred to the maximum facility. It helped him defend the King James

Bible against unlearned preachers coming into the institution, trying to steal the inmates' faith in the inspired words of God.

Every week I take into the prison all of the Bibles and Bible-help materials that I can carry—about \$300.00 worth each time. I need your help. The Bibles I give out are purchased at Sam's Club for about \$11.00 each. They are large-print, very readable, with flexible vinyl covers. But I cannot keep up with the demand. I am not asking for you money. Send me your quality King James Bibles. I refuse to distribute cheap Bibles. Send me that \$89.00 K. J. V. that is slightly worn, with a few marks in it, maybe one or two torn pages, but still has a lot of wear left. These guys would be proud to own a quality, used Bible. Don't bother to send an N. I. V. or a New King James; these guys are too knowledgeable to buy into a substitute. And before you write a condescending letter about "better translations," understand that I first started studying Greek 40 years ago. I use 3 or 4 different Greek Bibles regularly, and I don't necessarily believe any of them. If

you have been deceived and want to know more about the Bible issue, order the book we sell: *Which Version is the Bible?* It will get you started. Now, back to the prison ministry.

In addition to King James Bibles, every one of my students would love to have a *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. I buy them in lots of 10 for about \$12.00 each. In addition, the guys would love to have a good conservative Bible dictionary. Many of them will read it from cover to cover. Some of you have three or four Bible dictionaries that you haven't opened in a year. Give it to someone who will read it all the way through in the next year. *A Nave's Topical Bible* would be nice. If you have an old Larkin's *Dispensational Truth* lying around, I will let them draw lots to see who gets that prize.

If you put your name and address in the book you donate, the recipient will write to you, but it may be someone who tries to con you out of some money, so think twice before you commence correspondence with a prisoner whom you don't know. Many of the guys who receive Bibles and books will not be saved. But, if

you think you are up to it...well...go for it!

You could start a drive to collect Bibles and concordances, and then send them all together. It will save on shipping cost and provide us with a bigger harvest.

I told the guys that I was going

to lay this request before you. They are excited about the possibility of owning a good, used, leather-bound Bible and a Strong's Concordance. They await your response.

If you know of a prisoner who is in an institution that will permit them to own cassettes tapes or CDs, I will

send to them my Bible teaching tapes free of charge. We do it all the time. Before you send us their address, make sure they are permitted to receive tapes, for many prisons do not allow them. Help us help them. ❖

#### SOON TO BE FREE

Dear Mike and Debi,  
I know that the both of you, along with the Church family of Cane Creek have been praying for me for some time. Therefore, I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for interceding on my behalf; for the years of fellowship, teaching and love shown not only to myself, but all the many other inmates here at South Central.

I was one of the fortunate ones that have been able to be taught by you and your ministry since 1995, and I'll be the first one to admit that it has brought tremendous change. I've applied what you've taught us through the patient guidance of God's Holy Spirit, and I've seen the Lord revived in me and many others. I praise God for honorable men such as yourself that give week after week without ever asking anything in return. Brother, sister, I know what makes you both so happy, and that is to see one of us released and walking in faith, serving the Lord with all our might.

I'm all but settled in to serve my last 78 days here in Nashville, and it has been such a blessing to be able to minister to many that are like myself in preparation for leaving prison. I just wanted to stop for a few minutes to let everyone know that I'm walking in faith and trusting Jesus to see me through every hour of every day.

I've been asked to preach in 3 weeks. I'd ask that the Church body pray that God will give me direction through the Holy Spirit, and that I will not step out on my own. He has laid a message on my heart for some time, and I guess I was scared to bring forth such a message, as I felt so inappropriate and unlearned next to you, brother Mike. Well, it's time to step up to the plate and do what God is leading me to do. Please pray that God will bless me with courage and boldness.

I have gotten to visit with my wife for the last two weekends. She is only a 25-minute drive from here. She is so excited, and says she feels like a schoolgirl! Ha. I guess we are both a little bit nervous after all these years. God will see us through this as well.

Please let the brothers at South Central know that I sure miss them, and will continue to pray that our God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus bless them and keep them safe.

Standing in Grace,  
DeWayne  
Galatians 2:20

#### SECOND LETTER FROM A PRISONER:

Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

Mike & Debi,

It is my prayer that all is well with you and your family. My prayer is that God is still blessing you in all spiritual blessings. Thank you for the books and tapes. I received them Wednesday night. The books will be a lot of help for me. I have not read them as of today, but I hope to start on them this week end. Our Morning Bible Study has started the book of Daniel. I am going to try and get all of us reading the King James version of the Bible. I'm sure while we are in Daniel, contradictions will come; they have in the past.

Thank you for the tapes. I will pass them around. They will be a blessing to us here. I am looking forward to hearing [Authority Praying] because my prayer life needs to be better. I know that the Lord has given us the ability to do all things in Christ Jesus; just sometimes I fall short. I feel like I need a better prayer life.

Again, thank you for the books and tapes.

Your brother in CHRIST JESUS,  
Sam

# child labor

*It's amazing what a little hard work can do.*

Dad always had a mischievous habit of asking visiting children (of all ages) a question: "Hey little man, what do you do for a living?"

Most times the child would look nervous and glance at a parent, hoping for some hint to what the question was really about. But occasionally, the little tyke would look big old Mike Pearl in the face and give some original answer, like:

"I eat."

"I drive trucks."

"I work with Daddy."

"I talk."

"I can read."

"I'm only five. I don't have to work for a living."

The Amish folks in our community say that a child is a liability to his parents for the first seven years of his life. For the next seven years, that child should be able to hold his own; and for the last seven, he should be productive enough to repay his parents for the first seven years of their labor for him. Everywhere you go in the community, you see children at work along side their parents in the fields, the house, at the sorghum pan, and in the barn. No one is exempt from the duties of life, and no one complains about it.

The last time we went back to visit Big Papa and Mama Pearl, I went to a neighbor's house to buy fresh cow milk. It was in the upper twenties outside, and the ground was icy. As I drove up to the house, I noticed two tiny boys standing by a fence outside, watching their daddy do the evening chores. One of them looked about two years old and the other about eleven months. The little one could not keep his balance very

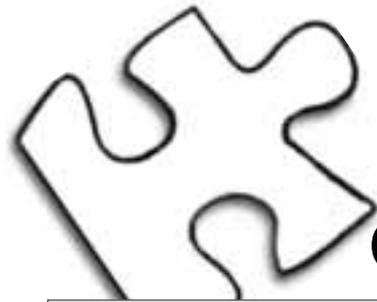


This was not a photo op. This is a true picture of little Laura Rose helping Big Papa with the dishes.

well and was propped up against the fence. Soon he slipped and fell down on the ice. He was so thoroughly bundled up that neither his feet nor his head touched the ground, and he teetered back and forth on the huge round of coat and belly until his daddy turned him right-side-up against the fence once again. Granted, the two boys were not accomplishing much in the way of actual work; but they were clearly being trained to go out and do chores with Daddy, while Mama put dinner on the table.

A few days later we returned home to New Mexico, and I looked at my almost-three year-old-son with a freshly speculative eye. He already had a few chores around the house,

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# one size fits all?

Dear Pearls,

I'm pretty desperate. I need HELP with my 21-month-old daughter. My husband and I joke that Rebecca was given to us like Paul's thorn in the flesh - to stop us becoming smug about the other 4 kids! I have never known a child with a will as strong as this, or an attitude as bad. She has been a handful from the beginning, and has almost got us beat. She is sunny and delightful... as long as everything is going just how she likes it. She is not sick. She is not allergic. She eats & sleeps well. She can communicate.

This is how it goes: 1) I give her a command. 2) She scowls at me and says "Uh Uh!" 3) I give her a swat on the legs. 4) She collapses on the floor and cries angrily. 5) I swat her again & tell her to stop crying. 6) repeat 4 & 5 up to five times. 7) she cries pitifully. 8) I tell her to stand up. 9) she obeys, crying all the time. 10) I repeat the command. 11) she obeys, grizzling unhappily all the time. 12) she is miserable for the next hour ..... repeat this little scenario 10 - 20 times during the course of an average day.

What am I doing wrong? I HAVE to get control of her, as she is only getting worse with age. We have prayed for her. We have read TTUAC & NGJ (several times since she was born!). We have read everything in the archives on your site. We have watched the videos. We need help. We're missing something. Give it to me straight!

Thank you,  
G & A  
South Africa.

## Michael answers:

Your letter indicates that you are responding correctly. I will assume that to be so. I have often said, "If it is not working, you are either not consistent or there is some other piece of the puzzle that is missing." My neighbours would say, "Don't keep saying 'giddyup' to a deaf horse."

Not all children can be trained equally with the same techniques. Many parents will do very well with two or three children, and then, using the same technique, do poorly with the next child, do fine on the following two, and then again struggle with the sixth or seventh child. Families have personalities. The personality and lifestyle of one family will lend itself well to training the tender, sensitive children, or do well with the girls, but do a lousy job of training the boys or the independent-

minded girls. Another family will do well with rough boys and high spirited girls but will crush the sensitive child. In some families, the first children born are easily trained in the natural flow of the family. The parents relax, thinking that child training is a breeze, wondering why all those other dummies can't do so well. And then they have a child whose temperament demands something more than the family naturally provides. They keep doing what worked with the other children, but it doesn't work with this child.

What we are faced with are the limitations of someone else telling you exactly what to do to raise your children well. Some children will brush off our inconsistencies and hypocrisy, accepting the fact that their parents are not perfect. They roll with the punches, so to speak. They

can be hurt or offended, told no, get six spankings in a row, and jump up to give you a big hug, all forgotten. Others carry their feelings around and keep an account of what they consider an offense. They become unreasonable, explosive, and critical; or they retreat into their own world. As they get older, they withdraw. There are subtle indicators emanating from children; they will tell us parents if we are on the right track. We cannot ignore these and just blindly press on as if we were rock crushers.

There are certain things that apply to all child training—yea, to life itself. We must spend most of our relationship tying strings of fellowship and good will with our children. Do things together. Win their admiration. Earn the right to

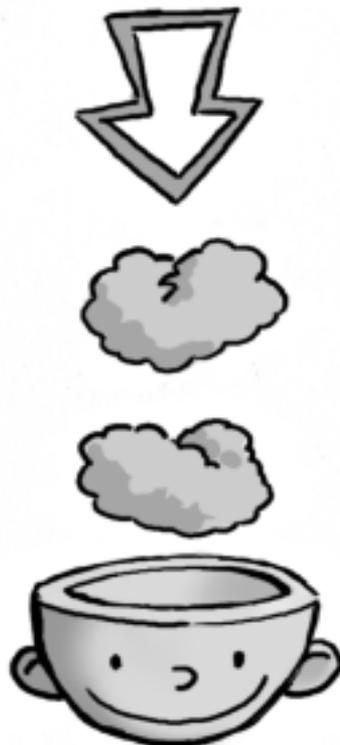
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## the two-brained kid

Just the other day, I heard an old mule trainer make one of the wisest statements about child training that I have ever heard. He was not talking about children; he was talking about one of the most notoriously stubborn animals that man ever made. You read it correctly—man makes mules. God wouldn't make anything that contrary. Horses and donkeys won't breed in the wild. They have to be coerced into breeding, and the result is an animal as strong-willed as any four-year-old that ever humiliated his mother in public.

The expert mule trainer said, "A mule has two brains, one *Acting Brain* and one *Reacting Brain*." He was not talking about the physiology of the mule; he was talking about its psychology. He went on to explain that as long as the mule is calm, he is thinking and trying to relate to you. In that mental state, you are able to communicate with him, and he is able to discern what you want and how to please you.

But if you push the mule too far and respond to him in anger or frustration, he decides that he cannot please you, and he starts reacting to your aggression with his own aggression, or with flight. Your goal is to get the mule to voluntarily cooperate with you—to *think and to act*. If you get upset and the mule gets confused, he starts reacting instead of acting. In that disturbed state, the mule is not capable of learning anything other than to fear you and resist you. When he stops trusting



you and stops thinking in terms of pleasing you, you may intimidate or beat him into submission, but you have not trained him. If you swing at someone and they duck, you have not trained them to bow in respect. You have clearly gotten a reaction, but not an action that you can expect them to voluntarily repeat in response to a verbal command.

Isn't it interesting that animal trainers know the importance of understanding and of patience in training. But most parents treat their children like wayward rebels to be managed, not trained, acting more

like correctional officers just trying to survive until the shift change. They ignore their children until their behavior becomes so irritating that the parents are provoked into reacting. When they finally confront them and trade verbal punches, inevitably one of them gives up in exasperation. Everybody is reacting and bouncing off of the other's displeasure. Then parents wonder why their kids are never trained.

Remember what the mule trainer said, and apply it here. When the kids stop functioning in their *Acting Brain* and start functioning in their *Reacting Brain*, you may eventually intimidate them into compliance with sufficient threats and manipulations, but you have not trained them in the least. They will learn to avoid doing certain things because of the consequences, but they will never under those circumstances develop any character. They will not respect you, honor you, or want to emulate you in any way. They will *react* to you until they get to be a full-grown mule, and then they will kick you into reality.

The mule trainer went on to say that you must win the confidence of the stubborn mule. You must lead him to trust you when you are in the training pen with him. He must be relaxed. If you sense that the mule is tense, don't try to get him to obey a difficult command. Win his confidence, and get his attention before you proceed any further. What wisdom! Many of you say with feigned indignity, "But my child is not a mule!" No, he is not. So why

## Two-brained Kid

do you give less attention to training him than does a man training a mule? Why do you think your child should be able to function well under tension and pressure when a 1000 lb. mule can't? Why not be at least as patient and thoughtful as a mule trainer? Quoting Bible verses to a distraught four-year-old is about as effective as quoting them to a mule.

So, now that I have described your situation exactly, what can you do to reverse this trend? Start by convincing your child that you have a good-will toward him, that you are delighted with him, that he makes your life full and rich. You can't do this in times of confrontation. You would look and feel like an imbecile if you started warm, fuzzy talk with him when the kid simply needs rebuking. In the good times, take your child by the hand and do something fun together. Enjoy his projects. Laugh at his antics. Call someone else, and let your son hear you tell them how smart or strong or tough he is. Be creative in devising ways to be pleased with your child.

Remember this well: As a parent, it is your responsibility to cultivate a mutual feeling of good-will between yourself and your children. When your child can relax in your presence, then, and only then, can you train him in obedience that leads to character. When your relationship gets confrontational, the only thing you can communicate is that you are tougher than he is. He needs to be assured of your toughness, but it is pitiful indeed if that is the sole basis of his obedience.

So let's finish where we started. A child (and a mule) has two brains, an Acting (thinking) Brain and a Reacting Brain; the reacting mental state is not a trainable condition; the thinking brain is. So learn to think and act; don't wait until both of you are reacting. Don't let your son grow up to be a mule, for you already know what that is like, having been married to one. ❖

## Child Labor

but most of his time was filled with following me and asking questions. "How much work can a little kid do, if a little kid has to work?" I thought to myself. So, I looked around the house for all the short-attention-span jobs I could find, and even made up a few.

Joe Courage gathers all the trash cans from around the house to empty into the large kitchen trash can; and then he returns the empty ones to the various bedrooms and bathrooms. He sets the table for me by taking one piece at a time from the low counter where I have purposely set the dishes for him. Every now and then, I peek around the corner and give a word of advice; however, it is amazing how well he does. After meals he also clears the table, bringing the dirty dishes to the sink where I wash them. Joe spot-cleans the kitchen floor with a wet cloth and puts away odds and ends all day long. He makes his bed and picks up his toys in the morning before he even comes out of his room. Joe cleans up the living room a dozen times a day by putting away his books and toys. And now, Joe Courage is learning to sweep the kitchen and the porch.

As a result, life is much more enjoyable for both of us! Joe calls me his "buddy" and tells me repeatedly throughout the day that he is my "helper" and "hard-worker." After a particularly attention-stressing job, we reward ourselves with a small glass of treasured peach/orange juice and sit down at the table to sip it with greatly deserved satisfaction. Joe Courage tells me what a good job I did and how much he loves me, until I am fairly glowing with contentment. It's amazing what a little hard work can do. ❖

## One size fits all?

rebuke. Provide a living example of all the things you demand of your child. There must be boundaries well-defined, consequences spelled out, responsibilities delegated, a reasonable time frame and quality of work specified and enforced. You as the lawgiver must be consistent in your enforcement. You must constrain with quiet, unemotional resolve. You must take genuine weakness, emotional or physical, into account, but you cannot show pity for weakness and frailty. In a confrontation, remember that you hold the high ground and maintain the dignity of your office. If a smart child sees a crack in your resolve or fortitude, they will attack that weak point and try to enlarge it into an opening by which to get outside the rule of law.

As to how to deal with this child, do not show frustration or anxiety over the difficulty she is causing. Don't panic because she is operating at a different level from the other children. If you are consistent and don't break all ties of fellowship, she will come around in time. The real danger here is that you will communicate rejection. When you have to spank a child more, you must balance it with more good times, more fellowship, more listening, more working together, more of anything that creates a bond. The key statement in your letter is, "She is sunny and delightful as long as everything is going just how she likes it." You must arrange her daily routine so that she never exercises veto rights over your will for her. If you allow her to dictate her will in little things that don't matter to you, when something significant comes up, you have already conditioned her to expect to get her way. The most important thing you can do is not spankings; it is to see to it that she never wins a contest of will in things big or small. You have to provide a consistent example of how life is not arranged around her will. Be patient. Be consistent. Train and you won't have to react. ❖