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NGJ ministries

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NO GREATER JOY MINISTRIES, INC. 1000 Pearl Road • Pleasantville, TN 37033 www.nogreaterjoy.org

JULY-AUGUST 2017 Volume 23 | Number 4 Printed in the USA

EDITORS IN CHIEF Michael and Debi Pearl CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Michael Pearl, Debi Pearl ART DIRECTOR Megan Van Vuren

COVER PHOTO Gwen Coyle by Erin Harrison



By Michael Pearl

Just the other day, I heard an old mule trainer make one of the wisest statements about child training 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 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

BE CREATIVE IN
DEVISING WAYS TO

BE PLEASED WITH

YOUR CHILD.

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? Most parents treat their children like wayward rebels to be managed, not trained, acting more like correctional officers just trying to survive until their shift changes. 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 others' 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 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 thousand-pound mule cannot? Why not be

at least as patient and thoughtful as a

A CHILD HAS TWO BRAINS: AN ACTING (THINKING) BRAIN AND A REACTING BRAIN.



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 goodwill 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 goodwill between you and your children. When your child can relax in your presence, then—and only then—you can 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.



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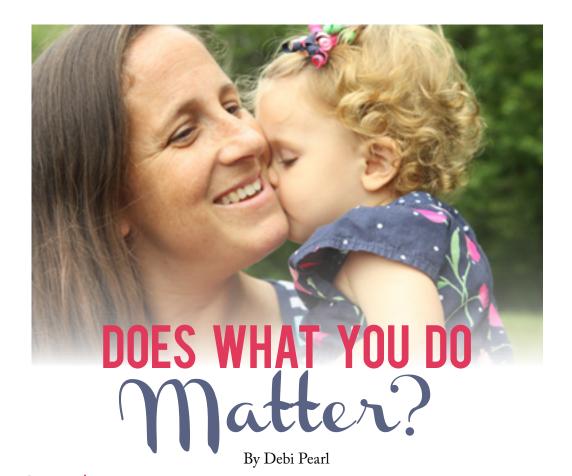
Come and join the reapers
All the kingdom seekers
Laying down your life to
Find it in the end.

Come and share the harvest Help to light the darkness For the Lord is calling faithful men.

"Faithful Men" by Twila Paris

Light Bearers Lighting the Way The Light Bearer Ministry is people—so far 70 people, some churches, homeschool groups, big families, little families, single people... all stepping forward and saying, "We will shine our light." Every day big stacks of mail come into NGJ from prisoners asking for a Good and Evil book. We separate these letters into states. Then we type the names and addresses onto sheets of labels. Each Light Bearer is sent some of these labels plus the prisoners' letters. The Light Bearer tells us how many they can send out, and that is how many we send them. The Light Bearers

purchase the Good and Evil books for a special ministry price. They buy shipping envelopes, add the books and tracts (some add letters of encouragement), and take the books to the post office to ship. We receive letters from prisoners and chaplains of prisons saying men are coming to know and love the Savior. Sometimes we get notes signed by many men saying thank you. Every time a Light Bearer sends out a Good and Evil book, you and your family are made safer, our society made stronger, and heaven made glad. God calls us all to be Light Bearers. It is his heart that all should know Him, -Debi

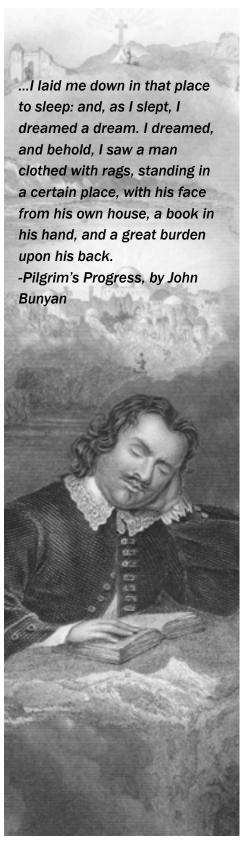


hen I was a young mother I often wondered "Does what I do matter?" My life seemed so purposeless. Most days were spent cleaning the house, changing diapers, cooking meals, feeding snacks to constantly hungry little ones, settling squabbles, and then doing it all over again an hour later. My husband would go paint pictures at the mall or go teach the Bible to military men, but it was too much trouble for me to go because the little ones would soon be tired or hungry or fussy or make a big mess. I remember wondering, "What is my life? Does what I do make any

It is not easy to see the whole picture when it is not yet finished, especially when it is just beginning. Sometimes the canvas seems so empty. I love productivity. I love ministry. I wanted to spend my life as a missionary or in ministry so I could count—really count—for eternity. Yet for many years, I labored in the mundane things of life.

Now as a woman of 66 years old I can begin to see the picture that God had for me. The early years were a building block of my future—the future that would have been drastically different if I had not been faithful in small things. In those

difference?"



early years I was pouring into young souls who would rise up and proclaim the name of the Lord. I was learning to be faithful, loyal, and forgiving. I was unknowingly an example that changed the course of many. Those early years were the time for learning and gaining skills that would allow me to minister in years to come.

As I wrote The Hidden Help Meet, I could clearly see that even those years when we feel we are doing nothing but drudgery, we are forging an eternal mark. One of the stories mentioned in the message The Hidden Woman is about John Bunyan, who wrote Pilgrim's Progress. John was a stubborn man who stuck to his convictions even when it thrust his wife and five young children into distress, poverty, and hunger. His faithful wife had to find a way to provide shelter and food for her hungry, sickly children as well as bring food to her husband because the prison did not feed those behind bars. When John asked for pen and paper (although in that time such things cost a great deal) she found and brought what he needed. Thus he wrote. John Bunyan would write because his wife was faithful, loyal, and capable. If someone had gone to Mrs. Bunyan while her husband lay in the prison and asked her, "Does your life count? Are you making a difference?" she would have no answer; she just did what she knew was right. Did Mrs. Bunyan's life matter? Without her support, her loyalty, her continuing to care for the

family, and her bringing him needed tools, there would never have been a *Pilgrim's Progress*. Her life mattered. What she did mattered.

WESLEY MEN OF GOD

Charles and John Wesley would preach because their mother was faithful. She did not fall into despair when in her first seven years of marriage she watched four of her seven children die. She would not give up when her husband was overbearing and harshly given to enforcing the law. She was faithful when the whole community stood against the family screaming out insults all night, even as she delivered yet another child. Then, in the midst of this loud turmoil,

her exhausted young helper rolled over and smothered her newborn. She pulled her weakened body and soul together and forged on with boldness. Only ten of her nineteen children made it to adulthood. Yet she put her grief behind her, poured into those children who lived, and from them came two of the greatest preachers of all time. Through her sons John and Charles, millions came to know the Lord. Both men said that it was their mother who taught them to know the Lord. Yet I know she asked herself every time she was pregnant, "Why?" I know that as people shouted insults during those dark and dreary days, she would wonder "Does my life have any meaning?" But she was

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faithful. Her life changed eternity for millions. It is interesting to note that one of her sons said he asked his prospective wife to read *Pilgrim's Progress* so he could know her heart by how she responded to the story. The threads of life are so woven that every color, every stitch helps create the picture that God wants to come forth.

Pilgrim's Progress came into my life when I was about 14 years old. Our public school taught classics. I chose to do Pilgrim's Progress. I still remember the day I stood before the class of thirty teens and gave them the gospel via Pilgrim's Progress. Almost 400 years earlier, Mrs. Bunyan honored God by faithfully doing the work God called her to do. My young life was making a difference in my classmates' lives because she was faithful.

As I worked on my book *The Hidden Help Meet*, I could see God's hand weaving a tapestry from the many lives of those who would day



in and day out honor Jesus. He has a master plan. What we do matters. We have no idea just how farreaching our faithfulness may be. I am thankful I have followed the course.

Your days may be dreary. You might have experienced extreme hardship or tragedy. You may be married to a man uninterested in God or in raising your children to honor him. But God has used simple obedience in the women of times gone by to prove to us that what we do matters. Live your life, teach your children, and honor God as if millions coming to know the living LORD depends on you, because it might.



LIVE YOUR LIFE, TEACH YOUR CHILDREN, AND HONOR GOD AS IF MILLIONS COMING TO KNOW THE LIVING LORD DEPENDS ON YOU, BECAUSE IT MIGHT.

FROM OUR Mailbox

Dear NGJ Ministries,

Thank you for sending my order of Sanctification/Sin No More in good time. It was something I thought I should listen to, as I thought it was going to be another thing I would try in my 21 years of intensive, laboring search for that elusive spiritual life that never comes.

The words of the gospel that I was crucified, dead, buried, and now live in newness of life IN the Lord Jesus Christ hit home to my heart after hearing the whole message during hours of work and listening. I thought I would just go for a slow bike ride and think about all I had just learned, when the realization dawned that I am dead and therefore free. I shouted, "I am free, I am free, I am free!" The dog looked at me a bit frightened that I had gone nuts. I returned to our yard and walked to the edge of the field and began again to proclaim these amazing words. It felt so good to shout it out with all of my body, soul, and spirit. I wished I could stand on my head or somersault when

I realized I
might look
like a lunatic
shouting to
the wheat
field, to the

trees, and to the sky "I am free!" but I felt I had never been more in my right mind. It has been a long, long time since I have done anything that felt this good, glorying with exultation to God that I am free in Jesus Christ. I was completely exhausted when a quietness and wonderful peace came over me.

For the next few days,
whenever my built-in magnet
defaulted to negativity and
condemnation, I would
proclaim, "In the
name of Jesus
Christ I am
dead to this. I
am alive and I am free,"

and let the character of Christ flow through me. After a week it felt like I had nothing to do! I had been full-time employed fighting all this negativity and condemnation, and now it is gone. Now I just have to speak out these words of truth and power every so often. It always works and it works all the time. "The preaching of the cross is to them

that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God'' (1 Corinthians 1:18).

I am grateful for my journey with God. The process was many times overwhelming and heartbreaking, but I have more understanding, and the Lord is more precious than ever before. He is great, mighty, and powerful, but meek and lowly too, and close to the broken in heart and the contrite ones. I feel like my journey has come to an end and a new one has begun. Sometimes I feel like "now what?" but it is always a reminder to praise and thank the Lord again for saving me from myself. The amazing thought is that it has always been there, always available, always fresh, and always new, but I just never knew.

In Christ alone, M.G.

JESUS PAID IT ALL

Mike adds:

Over the last 50-plus years we have seen pronounced trends. People, especially Christians, seem to have a need to go deeper into spirituality. It is the same fruit Satan offered Eve: "...your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). This "deeper life" usually comes in one of three ways: First, by placing one's self under the law of Moses, trying to act Jewish, keeping feast days and Sabbaths, etc. Second, through the doctrine of dying to self, suffering, and practicing self-denial. Or third,

a movement that has just about run its course due to its poor track record, the doctrine of receiving the gifts of the Spirit in order to have power with God.

Shortly after God started working in the hearts of young people in the early '60s, we saw two of these doctrines rise to prominence and steal from God's truth. Those laboring under suffering doctrine, like the lady who wrote the letter, were rewarded with a contrite soul full of depression. Those who jumped on the wagon of the gifts movement lost sight of God's full provision through Jesus for both justification and sanctification because they were so caught up in speaking in tongues and other lesser gifts. This doctrine seems to open the door to fleshly, self-centered sins as seen by the many leaders who fall prey to lusts of the flesh. Both doctrines relied on "correcting" the written Word of God. The bondage of "keeping the law" came later and is at its zenith right now. It too will fade with failure.

Over the years we've watched all those who jumped into these doctrines become disillusioned—nothing deeper, nothing worth keeping. Every few years a new generation believes that what they are learning is new, and that the rest of us just don't know the fullness of God. It is sad that the truth of salvation and justification is so simple and so freeing, and yet people want to go deeper—just like Eve.



WORKING WOMEN

Dust Pan Men?

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Pearl,

First of all, praise God for Created to Be His Help Meet! A woman at my church recommended this book to me. I started reading it and it has changed my life and my marriage! I told a few other women about it and they are reading as well, and their marriages are much better. Thank You. Thank God.

Recently, I have gone back to work full-time and my husband is at home with the kids and homeschooling them. My question is how can I still be a help meet in this situation? My husband is having health issues and thought it best for us to switch. He loves to cook and has been cooking. What are your thoughts on this situation? Thank you,

A Reader

Read Mike's Answer ->

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MICHAEL PEARL ANSWERS

Dear Reader, understand that I use your question as a springboard to address this issue in a broader way. Some of the things I say may not fit your situation at all. I am not attributing attitudes or actions to either you or your husband. Use my comments to gather principles that might apply to your situation.









IT IS NEVER IDEAL FOR THE WOMAN TO BE THE BREADWINNER AND THE MAN TO BE THE HOME-KEEPER.

It is never ideal for the woman to be the breadwinner and the man to be the home-keeper for the simple reason that the role reversal (a role dictated by our created natures) places each in a position contrary to their nature. A single woman may fit into the workplace as well as a man. A single man with children may function as the housekeeper, cook, homeschool teacher, etc., and do a fair job of it—all consistent with human nature. But the marriage relationship is unique. The man by nature is the savior, provider, and protector who braves the cruel

world and carries the responsibility to protect and nourish his wife and family. It is in a man's genes to take the command-and-control position. To become a dependent rather than the provider wreaks havoc on a man's self-esteem. In our modern world, the one whose name is on the paycheck is the head of all finances, the one to be thanked and appreciated. That person is the fountain of the family, possessing the right of veto over all spending, and controlling the direction of the family where it involves finances.

The one who comes home tired from a day's work is entitled to the recliner until dinner is served. It is the one who says, "Why aren't my socks in the drawer?" and "This house is a mess; what have you been doing all day?" The breadwinner decides what kind of bread to eat and whether or not spending is foolish or necessary.

A bread-winning woman is not vulnerable and finds it difficult to come home and be a submissive, servant wife. To be forced to do so breeds resentment and a feeling of being used. I need not go on; you know these things and more to be true to nature and experience.

But sometimes life throws unnatural curves and turns our world upside-down. We have to make do like a one-legged man. We get around and get along in the best way we can. When a man is

disabled and cannot enter the labor force, the wife may be thrown into an unnatural role of breadwinner. Sometimes the children are forced to work to provide for the family. It is not natural but it is necessary. A dependent man will have to accept a different worldview and a different role. He will have to accept not being fulfilled in the normal manner. And the bread-winning wife will need to learn humility and to try to maintain a feminine demeanor at home, giving deference to the man, allowing him to be a handicapped king in his limited domain. The dependent man will also need to learn humility and to accept his dependency with thanksgiving and grace. Like any unnatural handicap, it will not be easy, but it is entirely manageable, and each can find fulfilment in their role reversals.

However, when a couple reverses roles because the wife is able to make more money, or when the man is lazy and incompetent, or when she just likes to work and he just likes to hang out at home, you can be certain that neither is going to find fulfilment in their relationship, and their marriage is likely to end in the woman divorcing the man.

When both the man and woman are reconciled to the reality that the man is handicapped out of the work force through no choice of his own, and not having to do with incompetence, it takes the edge off









WHEN A COUPLE **REVERSES ROLES...** YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT NEITHER IS **GOING TO FIND FULFILLMENT IN** THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

of blame and the discomfort of role reversal; but when they both know it is a choice, expect the man to shrink in his self-respect and the woman to grow masculine in her demeanor leaving the marriage to suffer.

God said to Adam, not Eve, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (Genesis 3:19).

Paul declared, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8).

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:4-5). ■



he Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations.

and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and

despise government Presumptuous are they, selfwilled,

they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not;

...and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time.

Spots they are and blemishes,

sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

Leaders 2 Peter 2:9-19

aving eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin;

beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with Covetous practices; cursed children:

Which have forsaken the right way, **and are gone astray,**following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor,
who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

These are Wells without water,

clouds that are carried with a tempest;

to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

For when they speak **great swelling words** of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the **servants of corruption**:

for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.



THE 2 -YEAR-OLD

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Pearl,

Reading your posts about boys has encouraged me so much. I am married to a visionary (turning into a command man) and I have two little boys, a three-year-old and a two-year-old. Oh my word! Even at two, I can tell my youngest is a command man. I'm not saying that because he throws tantrums. He says in sentences what he wants and how he wants it. If he doesn't get it, he will cry and cry and scream for as long as it takes. I discipline in a few different ways, but I have had to learn how to encourage him to communicate what he wants in a respectful way. He is only two but he is smart! My three-year-old is bossy and needs desperately to be listened to. Unlike my youngest who is particular about everything, my oldest just wants to be heard and understood. It's so hard because their desire to be the leader and protector and the one with the vision is so strong already! Learning to discipline them has been interesting, to say the least! Please write the book before my boys are grown! I learn so much from you! Thank you for being such a blessing!

MIKE ANSWERS

It sounds as if you are a lady in charge of a squad of special forces. I think that under the best parenting these two boys would be a challenge. You might want to enroll in a judo class so you can manage them in ten years when they turn on each other. You are obviously dealing with little men who have the potential to become great leaders. All kids are born with different natures and different potential. Our job is not to change them into our preferred temperament but to steer them to achieve their potential while being respectful of others. I would rather have boys like yours than soft, saggylipped, dependent crybabies who must be encouraged to speak.

That said, what you lack is consistency. You said, "If he doesn't get it, he will cry and cry and scream for as long as it takes." The key phrase is "as long as it takes." Kids lack the understanding to weigh the cost of achieving their goals vs. choosing a more favorable alternative. Their passions get fixated on fulfilment and they project negative behavior "for as long as it takes."

A long time ago in a faraway land, I had a hound dog that was a great hunter, but one time he found a weak spot in the fence protecting the chickens and discovered why Colonel Sanders was so popular. Of course, I strengthened the fence so

no dog could get in no matter how determined. However, having gotten through the fence once and achieved great pleasure, he remained ever determined to break in again—"for as long as it takes." The stupid dog would pull on the wire with his teeth until his mouth bled. So out of compassion for my dear hunting dog, I placed an electric fence around the chicken pen, just one wire about nose high, hot enough to fry dog hair and curl his toenails backward. Have you ever seen a hound dog with a corkscrew tail?

The dog knew better than to attack the chickens when I was present, so I had to hide in the barn. You understand, it was not out of a sense of morbid pleasure; it is just that a true scientist must observe the results of his experiment. Sure enough, he skulked over to the pen, looking this way and that. I could see the spark leap out and connect with

WHAT YOU LACK IS CONSISTENCY.





his nose. I do believe I heard thunder generated by the lightning bolt, but it could have been coming out of the back end of the dog. I made a misstatement in calling the dog stupid. Once was enough. My chickens were safe and my hound dog was able to move on in life and focus on things more productive, like disposing of old shoes someone left on the porch.

THE KEY IS "CONSISTENTLY EXPERIENCED."

Now, before Anderson Cooper comes after me, be sure, I am not suggesting that you use an electric fence on your children. I am making the point that kids, like dogs, though they are incapable of logical reasoning and value judgment, nevertheless are motivated by what brings pleasure. The thought of possibly getting what

they want will keep them trying again and again like an old man in a flowered shirt sitting on a stool in front of a slot machine in the Las Vegas air terminal.

Negative consequences consistently experienced will deter any behavior by any creature on the face of the earth. The key is "consistently experienced." When a dog is allowed to eat the chicken intermittently—one time out of fifty tries—he learns to endure the pain of delayed gratification even when his gums bleed.

The best negative consequence is completely negative results. No one keeps putting money in a parking meter, hoping to reap a reward. No child repeats negative behavior unless there is hope of winning the battle. Crying, begging, demanding, pleading, and throwing a tantrum are all tools in the kid's arsenal, assaulting your will, which he knows has a breaking point, like the chicken fence.

Spanking is a good electric fence, but if you are inconsistent in your resolve, kids will even resist spanking, finding it less painful than suffering the loss of their passion. When you have once given over, you confirm the legitimacy of their tactics. Spanking without consistency puts callouses on the soul of the child and makes it an ineffective tool without increasing the intensity—which can become a problem.

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As a parent, you must understand the psychology of parental oversight. Don't share your headship. You are lord.

Children gauge the emotional weakness of parents. If you get angry or frustrated, they up the tempo of their resistance, knowing you are reaching the breaking point where you compromise or just throw in the towel.

As a parent and mentor, your winning demeanor must be one of cheerful, unwavering confidence. You are not moved by fits and crying. You look down from your command and control room with indifference and smile as you quietly repeat your

will. You stand by patiently while they resist, knowing that in the end you are going to win. Their electric fence may include a spanking, a denial of indulgence, rebuke, or reasoned explanation, but it must all be wrapped in absolute, consistent denial of their demands in every way—no compromise.

I say as I have said for the past 22 years, "Make all negative behavior counterproductive."

I have not addressed the needs of your three-year-old. Listen to him. Guide him to wisdom. Give him responsibility that enables him to find fulfilment for his aspirations.



Dear NGJ,

My husband and I have recently returned from a summer-long adventure (May-September) of hiking the Continental Divide Trail. It's 3,000 miles long, from Mexico to Canada. We were the oldest hikers to finish the trail this year (my husband is 76 and I'm 68).

In plowing through the mountain of mail that accumulated while we were gone, we found your article on "Homeschooling High School." Here's my take on that subject. We homeschooled our daughter from preschool through age 14. At that point, she went to college. We did not even bother doing high school. But our home "school" was very different from what I see a lot of my young friends doing with their kids.

I could say a lot more, but the bottom line is that when she was 14, she began to practice for the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE). We never bothered with the PSAT or SAT. The CHSPE is by law

HERE'S WHAT WE DID:

- We did not use a curriculum, except for math (we did have math books) and for learning to read (we used Sing, Spell, Read & Write)
- Once our daughter could read (she was pretty good at it by age 4, and by age 7 she was really good), I took on the role of encourager/coach rather than teacher. Once a kid can read, they can learn things for themselves!
- At our house, mealtime
 was "lively talk about
 history/science/whatever"
 time. She saw our
 enthusiasm for learning
 about these things and
 was able to participate
 from a young age.
- We learned history backwards. We started with current events and

- asked, "How did this come about? What caused it or led to it?" History makes a lot more sense that way.
- Science was another lively subject that we did mostly hands-on and talked about a lot.
- COMMUNICATION was a major emphasis for us. As Christians, we should be able to speak and write articulately and effectively. So public speaking and writing were important in our home school. We also emphasized being able to TEACH someone else.
- Our daughter pursued in depth any subject she was interested in. At age 9, she was using college-level books on these subjects. Note: She would be the first to say, "I'm no genius." It was because she had the freedom to pursue ideas, rather than being locked into a boring workbook, that she could do this.
- We are really into hiking and outdoors stuff. Our daughter did her first backpack trip with us when she was 3 years old, carrying her own little pack and covering 5 miles a day. I think that is important—so many kids are cooped up inside all day.
- We wanted to see our daughter volunteering and serving. She served at church, the public library, and an AWANA club for kids.

the full equivalent of a high school diploma. She passed the CHSPE with no trouble, and began attending the local junior college, pursuing what she'd decided on for a job—computer programming and graphic design (she is a very good artist.) Eventually she transferred to a nearby university and received a large academic scholarship that paid for ¾ of the fees. She graduated summa cum laude, and now has a very good job in her field, plus she's becoming known as a theater critic (theater was another one of her interests). She also goes to a local jail to lead Bible studies for women who are interested.

I would say, "Why bother with homeschool high school?" If you have been letting your kids dig IN DEPTH into what they are interested in, they will already be doing college-level work anyway. Don't waste their time!

It grieves me to see high school age BOYS stuck at home with a bunch of books, but that's what most of the homeschool families I know are doing. And then the moms complain about how their boys "just don't focus" and "daydream when they should be doing their schoolwork." Argh. I ask them "Why are you wasting your kids' time with high school?" and they look at me like I'm crazy.

I could say lots more, but I think this is enough! Monty Chipman

THE DEVIL'S HUG

By Michael Pearl

This article is rated R—not for children under 18, and possibly not for any unmarried person who wishes to remain in innocent ignorance.

Dear Mrs. Pearl, I don't want you to think I am dishonoring my husband. My heart is to lift him up and be a good wife. Something has happened over the last year that is scary. My husband has always been somewhat given to the flesh and occasionally angry, but now his anger is out of control. He often comes home

from work mad—mad at me, the dog, the kids, the car, the guy next door... anything and anybody can bring on his rage. The kids have nightmares and cry out begging him not to hurt their dog because he threatens crazy stuff when he is having a fit. We all try to have everything just right, but he still finds something wrong.



We are all a nervous wreck. Sometimes I wonder if he is demon possessed, but then he still goes to church and teaches. What do I tell the children, and what can I do to lessen the anger? —Sarah

MIKE ANSWERS

There is no way I can diagnose your husband and explain his issues by means of your comments. I can, however, speak in general terms regarding angry men.

First, choose a time when you are alone and he is not angry. In a non-confrontational manner, share with him how his anger hurts you and the children. Assure him of your desire to make him happy, and just ask him what you and the children are doing that makes him angry.

It may be that he feels he is not respected at work or at home, or it could be that he feels threatened by his financial affairs or job insecurity or any number of things that can leave a man feeling that he is losing control. Other men under that same pressure may not be angry at all. But the immature bully strikes out at everyone who is weaker than he.

He may be venting at home the emotions that have built up at work, knowing he would lose his job and look like a fool if he acted that way in public, which means he has self-control when he needs to. He just does not see the need to exercise it

THE IMMATURE BULLY STRIKES OUT AT EVERYONE WHO IS WEAKER THAN HE.

in a place where he doesn't have to earn his place of authority. He takes his "lordship" over the family to be a license. In his thinking, God makes the dutiful wife and children take it in silence. His sin is hidden and unidentified.

In a humble manner, rise up from the floor and name his sin to him. Never get mad in return. But look his anger in the eye as one who has personal dignity and will not be crushed by verbal abuse and unreasonable demands on you and the children. He wants you to break before his wrath. He wants to control you. Make your heart and spirit bigger than his smallness and love him, knowing he is willfully addicted and afflicted.

"Human nature" would prompt you to strike back, to stand in defiance, to attempt to break him in return, to make him repent and admit he is wrong, to force him to come crawling in contrition. That is a satisfying human emotion but one that will end in divorce.

So you must understand the difference between the victim you

DO NOT ALLOW THEM TO GROW UP THINKING HIS ANGER IS NORMAL AND ACCEPTABLE.

have been, the adversary (which you could become to your detriment), and the child of God who unflinchingly and with confidence looks him in the eye and takes his verbal lashes as if they were confessions of his weakness. Jesus said, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). He also said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:10-12). Paul said, "...being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things

unto this day" (1 Corinthians 4:12–13). But Paul's shoulders were unbowed and his joy unabated. The Spirit of God will give us the same attitude that Peter attributed to Christ, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23).

There is great victory in the Christian heart, and great dignity. If you crush a rose it releases its fragrance. An angry husband cannot defeat a Spirit-filled wife, nor can he take satisfaction in her silent suffering, for she stands straight and unapologetic as she looks him in the eye with a knowing that pierces to his innermost being.

As to your children, do not allow them to grow up thinking his anger is normal and acceptable, that they are to blame and must alter their actions in unreasonable ways to quash his tirades. Take this as a blessed opportunity to teach them the virtue of Christ. Explain that Daddy is walking after the flesh and displeasing God, that he is a sinner in need of the Spirit of love and mercy. This is an unparalleled opportunity for you to demonstrate the contrast between true Christianity and a hypocrite. By showing mercy and loving him anyhow, you will be drawing a contrast that will commend them to Christ. But if you come down to

his level and fight with him, they will forever hate Christianity, which is a reasonable response that has produced many emotionally driven atheists.

So when he

is not home, sit the kids down and go through the Scriptures concerning anger and love, mercy and grace, patience and persecution. Tell them that he is wrong. He is a sinner in need of Christ. If he is a minister or active in church, explain to them that he is

The children will take their cue from you. They will not be harmed by his anger if you display a Christian response and compassionately give verbal context to his anger.

a hypocrite who needs to repent and

be filled with the Spirit.

THE NEW TREND

In our more than twenty years of receiving letters, we have observed trends. Once it was child training questions, then homeschooling.

There was a trend to seek counsel on dealing with older children, then a common concern for courtship and marriage. Of course, making our marriages great was a major movement. But today our letters



DON'T BECOME A SLAVE TO ONE WHO PERVERTS THE LOVELY PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURE FOR HIS OWN SINFUL LUSTS.

reveal that a number of wives are perplexed by their angry husbands. And by investigation we have learned that in many cases the anger comes with the use of pornography. The porn addict who started with moral convictions hates his sin and hates himself—as he should. His addiction has carried him to a dark place where women are objects of lust and passion. They are not respected, and they are expected to be compliant and feed his lusts. One of the first questions we have asked wives of angry husbands is "Is your husband a user of pornography?" Most wives don't know until we tell them the

symptoms. It is common that the advanced user of porn expects his wife to submit to anal use and other disgusting things (changing the natural use of his wife [see Romans 1]). When she refuses, he is angry and often tells her that as a Christian she is supposed to submit to him and satisfy his needs. Don't become a slave to one who perverts the lovely principles of Scripture for his own abominable lusts. Again, look him in the eye as you say with dignity, "I am not going to take the path to hell with you. God created my body for natural use, not queer perversions."

Dear ladies of angry husbands, first, make sure you are not

exacerbating the problem with antagonistic responses. Be humble. Stand tall with dignity. Submit yourself to the love and rule of God. Say no when it is needed. Look him in the eye as one who is informed with the truth and not afraid of anger or lying accusations. You are a child of God and are loved by God; love in return. He may repent or he may not, but you will grow to be more like Jesus and your children will know the difference between a true martyr and a victim. The victim is timid and afraid, whereas the martyr can "rejoice and be exceeding glad" (Matthew 5:12). ■

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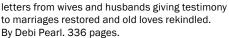
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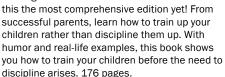
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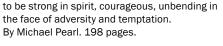
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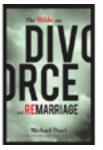
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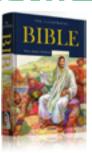


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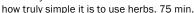
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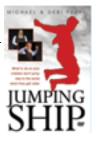
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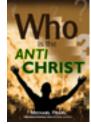
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