



NO GREATER JOY

JULY-AUGUST 2018



**HOMESCHOOLING
ISSUE**

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 4).

NGJ ministries



This is not like our usual magazine with marriage and child training articles, but instead focuses on homeschooling per your request. Our children contributed, which made it easy for us old folks, as we have been busy traveling, speaking, and writing another book.

We are seeing a time of great harvest. After years of pouring into the ministry, we are now seeing hundreds of thousands being reached with the gospel through our Good and Evil book, and most of these are young Muslim men. Good and Evil is the story of God, starting at Creation and going right through the Bible, using high-quality art and simple storytelling. Join us in praying for this harvest.

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EDITORS IN CHIEF
Michael and Debi Pearl
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Michael Pearl, Debi Pearl, Gabe Pearl,
Nathan Pearl, Shalom Brand,
Shoshanna Easling
ART DIRECTOR
Megan Van Vuren



A DIP

TO REMEMBER

By Nathan Pearl (our younger son)

Sir John Dahlberg (Lord Acton) famously stated, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Just read an article the other day where a young man and his friends were stealing from a neighbor down the street. They got caught and had a shootout with the cops. The young man’s friend with a gun tried to shoot one of the police officers and instead was killed. The officers predictably apprehended all the thieves. When the young man had his day in court and charges were brought against him, rather

than be sorry, he was inexplicably defiant to the judge. Instead of displaying even a pretense of remorse for his crimes, he boldly stated, “I ain’t got time for this!” certain that no law or authority could affect his way of life. He got 65 years to reconsider.¹ ►►

¹ <http://www.wsfa.com/story/37892195/teen-laughs-before-judge-hands-down-65-year-prison-sentence>

Fear should not be the defining characteristic of the relationship, but it should be the fence that protects them from things on the other side

As my wife and I talked about this we wondered, how does someone get to the strange and ridiculous perspective that they need not fear authority at all? I believe it starts with a 1-year-old boy who believes he has no boundaries, but instead has absolute power over his own life. Throughout his life, his experience is that if he is loud enough, brash enough, angry enough, and if he flails hard enough, opposition will cease and the universe will conform to his wishes. When you state it plainly it seems silly, and yet everything about his childhood confirms this worldview. As an independent sovereign he knows no fear, certain that—regardless of his actions—there will be no negative consequences. This is creating a generation of miscreants who do not fear authority.

The problem as I see it is that we Christians often filter the teaching of Scripture with popular culture instead of the other way around. As a parent—especially as a father—it is my responsibility to reject the counsel of the ungodly and to embrace the teaching of the Word of God. The Bible plainly teaches that fear can be healthy. Solomon tells us that *“the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” Proverbs 9:10*. This is vital information that should be ingrained in the psyche of every man and woman alive. Unfortunately, it is not.

That is why *“broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction” Matthew 7:13*, and it is full of people without the fear of God.

You cannot explain the fear of God or the fear of the law to a 6-year-old, yet much of the worldview he will have for the rest of his life is formed in early life. By the time he can clearly form two sentences, run without falling, and look forward to Saturday, he should have learned a proper fear of authority. Fear should not be the defining characteristic of the relationship you have with your children, but it should be the fence that protects them from things on the other side.

"You've been swimming"

When I was 7 years old, we had a pond by the house. I was a good swimmer and had no fear of drowning. One day, while my brother and father were out throwing a baseball, I went over the hill and took a swim in the pond. Now I swam in the pond all the time with the family present, but one of the house rules was that you don't swim alone. However, the day was hot, and in the spirit of Tom Sawyer I decided to go for a dip. About the time I finished my swim and got out, my dad and brother came over the hill and found me there, dripping wet, just out of the pond. My dad took one look at me

and said with all the gravitas that only a father can muster, “You’ve been swimming.” “Yes,” I replied while looking at the ground, knowing I had been caught. He took his belt off right there and gave me a whipping I wouldn’t soon forget. You see, my authority understood something that I didn’t: children drown, even those who are good swimmers. It is dangerous, and children should not be swimming unattended. At 7 years old, the danger posed was so

I will always be grateful for his willingness to act in love on my behalf to protect me with the fence of fear



remote that to a young mind, it was non-existent. I had swum before and I was fine; why wouldn’t I be fine again? But to my mind, the danger posed by a just father who had given the law—and then was willing to back it up with action—was very clear. The fear of my father could have saved my life. I will never know, but I will always be grateful for his willingness to act in love on my behalf to protect me with the fence of fear. I remember after getting spanked he grabbed me by the shoulders, looked at me with tears in his eyes, and gave me a hug. Seeing my dad misty-eyed startled me enough that the incident was burned in my mind. You see, our relationship was not based in fear, but in love.

As a Christian our goal is to be Christ-like, to follow the example he set. As such, your home should never be one that’s filled with fear as a defining characteristic. I’ve been in homes like that, where fear hangs over your head like the smell of formaldehyde at a funeral home. Because of this, the home exists in a state of constant civil war, where anger, fits, silence, and physical altercations are the status quo. In that home everyone is equal, the advantage going to the one making the most noise or inflicting the most pain. In that home, when Dad gets out his belt,

continued on page 10

TEACHING THANKFULNESS

By Michael Pearl





The following is an excerpt from
Training Children to Be Strong in Spirit
Chapter 6: *In Favor With Men*

*S*urely the righteous shall give thanks
unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in
thy presence." Psalm 140:13

Teach your children to be thankful by example and then by arranging home life so they must earn access to the pleasurable extras of life. They must see the link between labor and reward, between things and the cost. Literature abounds with stories of kings or wealthy men placing their sons as servants or as common men in order to prepare them for the high level of responsibility they will eventually inherit. It is well known that the coddled are not as competent in positions of responsibility as are those who worked their way to the top.

If children do not see the connection between what you provide and their consumption, they will not be appreciative. Certain things we take for granted depending on our culture and lifestyle. In America the only child that has ever thanked his parents for his mattress is the one who had to sleep on the floor for a

period of time. I am not suggesting you have your children sleep on the floor; just consider the principle. When I stayed in the Maya Indian village in Central America, one of the guys gave his foam mattress to a man and his wife who knew nothing but sleeping on a wooden bench. They were overjoyed with

Establish a connection between the things your children receive and the labor required to obtain it

thankfulness. A kid who never gets candy is very thankful for one piece, but a child that is given unhindered access to junk food assumes that it is his right and is never thankful for a gift of candy. In short, overindulged children never learn to be thankful. You will do well if you take care to establish a connection between the things your children receive and the labor required obtaining it.

Remind your children how hard their father works to provide for them. When they are foolish with their things, remind them, “Daddy had to work 12 hours in the hot sun so we could buy this item, so we need to be wise and not waste Daddy’s labor.”

Flea Market Education

We lived far from any shopping center and seldom got out other than to work. But about once a year we traveled three hours to a big flea market. It covered around 100 acres and was just too big to see in one day. I remember the kids saving up for the shopping trip when they were very young.

Every day they would count their money. Each of them had

somewhere between \$20 and \$45. They were excited—all the possibilities! As we got out of the truck, I told them to not buy until they had checked the entire sale and found the best price. They already knew how to dicker for a lower price, having watched Deb and I do it a hundred times. I crossed paths with them from time to time and slowly they filled their totes with their purchases. Late in the day, our money gone and our purchases stowed, we headed home. On the way home they excitedly told their stories of getting a better price or of finding “just what I always wanted.”

Just because you always wanted it, doesn't mean you should have purchased it

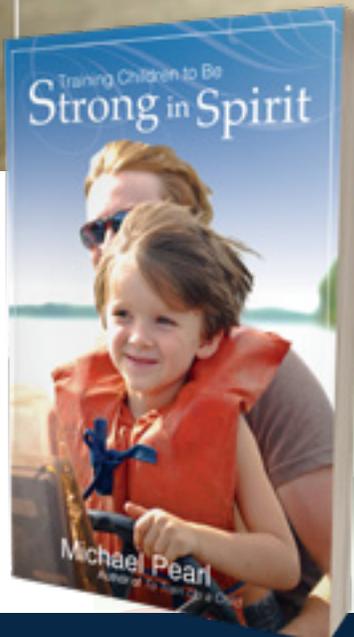
But they were soon to learn one of their greatest economic lessons. Just because it was on sale, and just because you got it even cheaper, and just because you always wanted it, doesn’t mean you should have purchased it. Over the coming days as I observed them handling their new purchases and listening to little remarks, I noted they all questioned some if not all of their purchases. I think they enjoyed counting the money every day more than they did the use of the items. Rebekah now had a fancy lead rope for her pony, but the eight dollars was gone forever. Rebekah mentioned that the

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40



This book is the elaboration of God's six pillars of child training!

1. Grew/Increased in Stature
2. Waxed Strong in Spirit
3. Filled With/Increased in Wisdom
4. Grace of God was Upon Him
5. In Favor with God
6. In Favor with Man



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old piece of dirty rope had worked just as well.

I felt their loss. It was sad to see their regret, but I knew it was a lesson well learned. I wouldn't have prevented it for anything. After that experience they were all as tight as a knot in barbed wire. When Nanny

and Daddy Bill came to visit and brought the kids something they would have bought if they had been less tight with their money, they were highly grateful, expressing their thanks profusely.

Teach your children to be thankful and they will gain favor with man. ■

Fear properly exercised is not fear that Dad will get mad, but rather that Dad is righteous

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it is as a tyrant terrorizing his toddlers, not as a teacher instructing his children. In that home, lack of fear is not the problem, but rather lack of order and an authority structure. Fear properly exercised is not fear that Dad will get mad, but rather that Dad is righteous and just and will hold me accountable to the standards he has set. Proper fear does not necessarily require corporal chastisement after every infraction any more than it requires you to go to prison to learn not to speed. It will, however, require properly exercised authority that is consistent, well thought out, and universally enforced.

A godly and balanced home will have a father who is in charge and engaged, and Mom will be his trusted and well-loved lieutenant who helps enforce the standards that Daddy has set. In this home, there is a chain of authority where Christ is the head that Dad follows intentionally, carefully, and prayerfully. Mom follows Dad just as intentionally and carefully as he follows Christ, and

she joins him equally in prayer to fully cover their home. The children willingly embrace the structure of the home and function inside the boundaries Dad has set for them. There is no struggle for supremacy and no civil war in this home. Instead there is pervasive peace filled with love and harmony. And when that peace is inevitably violated, Mom and Dad are there to correct as needed in order to reinstate the harmony.

Today it seems that a home like this is too good to be true, like it must be some sort of made-for-TV fairy-tale, but I grew up in this home, my kids are growing up in this home, and if you apply yourself to the Word of God, you can have this home too. Pick up your Bible and read it, and when you are done, read it again and again. Then apply your life to living out the Word of God. ■

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. (1 Peter 5:6-7)





TRAINING BABIES

By Shoshanna Easling (our youngest daughter)

How do you raise hardworking, cheerful children who look for ways to serve those around them? It's easy when you start on day one. The day they are born, training begins.

Don't think I mean spanking because I mean nothing of the sort. Most people think of training very differently than I do. Training is in everything we do. We train them whether we mean to or not. We train them with what we say, with what they're exposed to, with the tone of

our voice—every single thing in their life is training. Because children are learning so quickly, by the time they are 5 years old 90% of their brain is developed. Here are four principles I use to train my babies.

First, it's so simple yet so important: our babies need to feel loved

People often talk around their babies, but don't actually talk to them

and completely secure. As soon as my babies are born, I like to make sure they have a lot of skin-to-skin contact. All they have ever known is being in your belly, so if they are away from you, they're not going to have that close, secure feeling, hearing you, feeling your movements, soaking in your warmth, and touching your spirit. Even newborns can be alarmed at the sudden change of their environment. So stay cuddled up skin to skin and let your newborn get accustomed to being outside his safe cocoon. Touch is so important and soothing to them. Massage their body and lay them on your chest so they hear the familiar beat of your heart. Talk. People often talk around their babies, but don't actually talk to them. Your baby is learning so fast, and he needs to know he is being spoken to. I talk to my baby every single day, all day long. He heard me while he was in my womb and he heard me continue when he was born. Every day he hears me say, "I love you baby, I love you, I do, I do." I know people will think I am crazy and I am sure it was just an echo from him, but when he was eight days old he said, "I love you, I do." My husband and I were sitting on the bed and we heard him echo that, and we thought, "Whaaaaaat?" We

stared at each other like, "DID YOU HEAR THAT?" We were totally shocked. I know that babies are absorbing everything. I'm sure you are wondering if he kept saying it after that. No, but he echoed basic sounds of words from the very beginning.

When we are talking to our little ones, our language, our body language, and our tone are all important. We need to engage with our children. When I was growing up I saw a lot of parents who communicated well with everyone else, but I never saw them really talking to their children. You may have noticed kids who don't quite make eye contact? It's because they are not accustomed to having adults look them in the eye unless it is to fuss at them. Not my children. They are the most important people in my life, and I let them know it by how I talk with them. I start the day by saying, "Hey kiddo, how are you doing? Oh, it's so good to see you this morning! I'm so glad you're up with the sunshine! Your face is like sunshine itself! Gimme a big ol' hug. I need some sugar from you!" I make sure the words as well as the shiney tone are clearly there. It's going start their day off with such positive, happy thoughts.

People say babies are too young to know what is happening, but I



All children need to feel they are needed, not just loved and adored

think mothers know best! By giving a sound of “psh, psh, psh, psh” every time I felt my day-old baby’s diaper get warm with pee, I trained him—or you might say conditioned him—to that sound. By day three of his life, I put him over the tub and made the psh, psh, psh, psh sound. He peed in three seconds. He did it the next time and the next time and the next. The rest is history. He knew from day three that I wanted him to potty when I made that noise. So whether we are outside or in a bathroom in a restaurant, he goes pee when he hears me make the

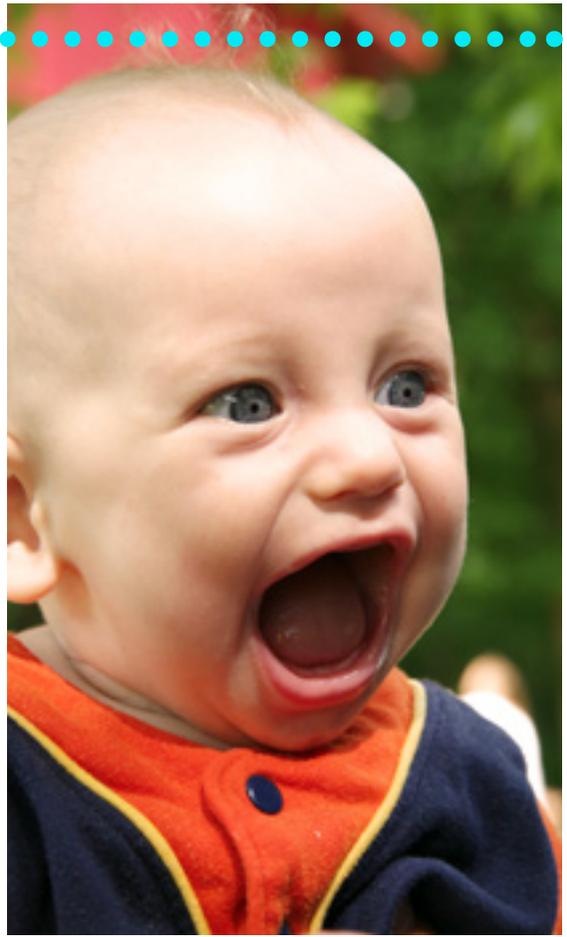
sound. He is 9 months old now. His big brother takes him potty and even his 7-year-old sister can hold him over the tub so he can pee.

Second, when training children, make sure they have purpose! Most parents of small children are just trying to keep their children entertained while they are on Facebook or Pinterest. Such a waste of the best training years. Parents need to stay focused that this is the time for building character and brains! Young children need a purpose or they are going to be ornery. You think this doesn’t apply to the 2-year-old? Think again. All children need to feel they are NEEDED, not just loved and adored. From very early they need to feel they have something worthy to contribute in service to others. Otherwise, a child will grow up lazy, selfish, foolish, and frustrated.

What do I mean by having purpose? A child needs to see that he is doing his part in making things happen that help the whole. My baby knows he is an important part of the party and an integral piece of the project. He wants to be in the center of everything. For example: I’m cooking and he’s (at 8 months) on my countertop. I hand him a big spoon and show him how to hold it and

say, “Hold this.” I wait, and then say, “Now give me the spoon so I can stir, but now hold this other spoon.” After one or two times, he will stare at me with great concentration, knowing he is part of what’s going on and that what he is doing is important. Of course, he isn’t actually helping, but he’s a part of the current activity, he’s included in the project. He feels valued and needed. When he is helping, I have a conversation with him, and when someone takes note of him helping, we speak of him being a good helper. By the time he is 2, he will be actually serving people. He will be useful in this world and in our home. I have raised two children this way and they both love serving others. My parents raised my siblings and me to serve others; it was one of the most important aspects of our youth, and I am thankful. I am embarrassed for parents when I see their teenagers mad because they want something or want to go somewhere while their mama waits on them. There is nothing nastier than a lazy girl unless it is a lazy boy who avoids work and thinks it is funny to skip out. That is silly as well as lazy. Give your children a purpose by allowing them to be an active part of everything you do.

Third, learn to have correct reactions. The way you react will determine how your child reacts. This is



The way you react will determine how your child reacts

where wise training comes into play. For example: Let’s say baby bumps his head. How will you react? Often parents rush to the child, “Oooooo hooooooney, I’m so sorry that you’re huuuurt! Oooooo!” Our smart baby responds to our pitiful tone by being pitiful, and so he is trained. He thinks, “It’s time to be upset! There’s a problem here! I need to scream and the louder I scream, the better!” Your pity makes him feel distressed.

Falling is nothing to be frustrated over



Your reaction to him getting hurt is sad, so this sets him off. Can you see that he is being trained that when he feels a small twinge of pain it is time to scream? WAIT, parent. It is time to think this through. By reacting with a pitiful tone and words, you are causing your child constant emotional drama—not helping him! You are not being good to your child by making him weak. Instead, when your little one falls over and has a slight pain, say, “Woooo, you’re tough; you’re so strong! You big boy, are you okay? Here, let me give you some kisses for being so tough.” Mama is saying with a tone of joy, “I am so proud of you!” And the child is being trained that a little pain is nothing to be upset about. Falling is nothing to be frustrated over. A child who is trained like this will look at you when he gets hurt, making sure you see. Then he will give you a suave look that says, “Yeah, I’m cool.”

Training can be both positive and negative. For example, often when a baby is nursing, even before he has teeth, he will bite your nipple. And

Half of training your children is first training yourself to control your reaction

he’ll bite kind of like he’s experimenting, right? Instead of not reacting because it’s not painful, say, “Stop it. Don’t do that.” Your tone should show dislike because you are training him to not bite. Don’t make it fun, and don’t make it a game. Show a negative reaction. “No, no. Don’t do that. That hurts.” Babies take their cues from our tone. They learn that “if I bite, it’s going to hurt someone.” Be consistent. If they pinch you or hurt you, look shocked and say, “No, that hurts.” They are learning, and they only KNOW what you train them to know. Have you ever seen an ape train her baby? She is FULL of reaction! And the baby is not offended about the mama’s reaction because the mama is not angry. She is not upset; she is communicating to her baby that that is dangerous, or it is bad and or is not good. Our babies are certainly more intelligent than apes! It is time we start training them. If you react properly, your children will never be offended—and they shouldn’t be. This is just training. Parents do this by default! If you expect offence, you will get an offended child. Teach them from an early age not to be offended when you say, “No” or when you say, “That hurts!” A child will stop nursing and stare at you, searching your face for rejection. Instead you should be



I have taught her that new experiences are okay

pleasant but firm in your tone, “Stop. It hurts.” Half of training your children is first training yourself to control your reactions.

Finally, training your children to be confident will help them adjust to new experiences. Children like sameness—same cup, same seat, same blanket, same bed, etc. But in life, everything isn’t always the same. When we are going to go somewhere, do something, meet new people, or see new sights, we can make these experiences something of wonder or dread depending on how we introduce them to our children. I have heard parents say, “Ooooh, what are we going to do? What are we going to see?” or “Oh, does he look scary?” or “Are you scared?” This is the wrong approach. You build confidence in your child by your tone, words, and body language. If your child is going to be sliding down a big slide, say, “Pfff, you’ve got this! No big deal!” You may be freaking out inside, but to your child you must show confidence. Watching my 9-month-old learning to walk has me on pins and needles, but I remember I am training him to have confidence. Generally, but not always, daddies can be rougher than mamas. I can be cringing inside, but I don’t

show my panic outside. I just say, “Wooo, good job, kiddo!” My goal is to not raise a whiney child who grows up without any confidence. I want my son to feel confident going into new experiences and doing new things. My 7-year-old daughter could go into a restaurant by herself and order a meal and pay for it. Would that be new for her? Absolutely! She’s never done that! But I have taught her that new experiences are okay, and I’ve also taught her how to handle new experiences when they don’t go right. It starts with building confidence in babies with something simple like falling. We all have moments of hurt, panic, or confusion; we want our children to be able to handle them as a matter of course because they were trained from the beginning.

These are four ways I train my kiddos. A child’s brain is soaking up everything around him, so be teaching all the time. You will find me singing the alphabet, teaching my baby phonics, showing him sight words, constantly holding stuff up and saying, “This is a pink pen—actually, it’s a marker!” I am always teaching and interacting and he is taking it all in, absorbing good things and learning thankfulness. ■



HOME SCHOOL ADVENTURE



PLAYING POSSUM

By Debi Pearl

SOME YEARS AGO, Mike came home from preaching at the prison really riled up.

I thought something bad must have gone down with the inmates. After he calmed down Mike told me, “I will never again ride down to the prison with John.” (I am not using the real name to hide the guilty, although he knows who he is!) Mike continued, still breathing hard, “That

guy almost ran off the road in a deep curve with a 500-foot cliff just so he could run over a possum! He scared me to death... almost! And why does he feel the need to kill a possum just for the sake of killing a possum? From now on it will be MY car and I will be the one driving, and the

possums will live and so will I.” I didn’t dare grin, although I thought it was rather amusing that Mike was scared, since he has scared me to death (almost) more times than I could count.



Possoms are good mamas

It was sad about the possums. The possum-killing man obviously didn’t know what I know about these creatures. If he knew the facts, he would be treating the lowly possums with praise rather than running them down with his car wheels.

Possoms are good mamas. They carry their babies on their backs much like homeschooling mamas. Isn’t it adorable seeing the babies all loaded on the back of their mother? How could anyone take offense at such cuteness?

Another thing about possums is that they are not at all aggressive. They are so gentle that if they are threatened, instead of fighting back, they just play dead. I know this is true because once we caught a possum and, sure enough that possum just rolled over and appeared to be dead. I thought maybe we had given the poor little animal a heart attack

by chasing it. We rolled it over and over, pulled its hair, and poked it with a stick, but it just lay there with no signs of life. How can you tease or play with something that is dead or so scared it looks as if it is dead? It can really make you feel like a jerk—maybe because we were being rather like jerks. Anyway, I saw with my very own eyes that what they say about possums playing dead was, in fact, a FACT.

I have heard all my life people referring to “those nasty, dirty possums.” This is a good time to tell you not to trust everything you hear, because often what you hear is just a tale—something that is simply not true. A wise person always fact-checks. Rather than being dirty, possums are fastidious in their grooming habits. “Fastidious” means finicky about cleaning themselves. If the phrase “cleanliness is next to godliness” were really in the Bible, then the lowly possum would be the most heavenly of creatures. Of course, a fast fact-check in a Bible concordance will tell you that the phrase is not to be found in Scripture, unless it is in some off-brand, new blarneyed translation. I surmise that it may have originated with my (or someone else’s) mama, but it is NOT in the Bible and that’s a fact.

Tick Jump

Saintly or not, possums are very clean animals, but for some



One bite from a tick can give you multiple diseases, but the one that is most rampant is Lyme disease

strange, wonderful reason, ticks LOVE possums more than any other animal. In fact, ticks love possums TWICE as much as other furry beasts. Mice are the main source of diseases that are carried by ticks. Unlike the cleanliness habits of possums, mice have poor hygiene, which means ticks stay on board feeding off the blood of mice—including their diseases. Getting rid of all mice is very important in controlling disease. Thankfully God designed ticks to prefer possums. Ticks are quick to jump aboard possums any chance they get, making possums the most effective tick traps you will find in the woods. Now, think for a moment: possums draw ticks to themselves and possums have fastidious grooming

habits. What do these two facts seem to reveal?

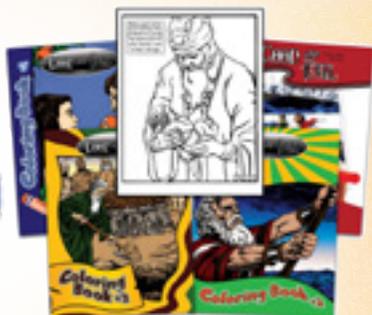
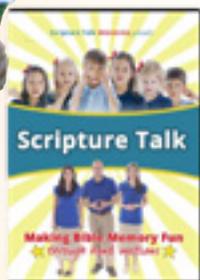
One possum can rid this world of 5,000 ticks each season!

If you guessed that when possums clean themselves they kill the ticks and thus dispose of them in a very effective manner, then you are correct. One possum can rid this world of 5,000 disease-causing ticks each season!¹ To make it even better, possums can eat the diseased ticks

1 <https://www.newstimes.com/news/article/Robert-Miller-Opossums-killers-of-ticks-5413872.php>



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without getting the diseases the ticks carry. As a matter of FACT, possums are resistant to many diseases and are rarely found to be rabid.

Tiny HUGE Bites

Ticks are a real menace to everyone's health and well-being. Just three types of ticks can carry as many as 15 terrible diseases. One bite from a tick can give you multiple diseases, but the one that is most rampant is Lyme disease. If you don't know about Lyme, you really need to research the subject. Lyme disease can be life threatening, and it is certainly a debilitating disease that, once contracted, can take years for a person to recover from. Many children in some areas of America are crippled due to Lyme disease. All this sickness comes from one little disease-carrying tick. Keep in mind

that not every tick carries disease. In some areas in the north, as many as half of the ticks carry diseases but even of those, only three percent of the bites result in infection. The sooner the tick is removed, the better the odds of not getting Lyme or another tick-borne disease. But disease-carrying ticks are increasingly a threat to everyone's good health.

The medical community has come to realize that Lyme disease is more prevalent and problematic than previously thought. Scientists are working on ways to limit transmission of Lyme disease by reducing record-high tick populations, but God already provided for mankind through the possum.

And now, people are becoming aware that possums, rather than dogs, could indeed be man's best friend or at the very least, a very good helper.

And that's a homeschooling adventure! ■



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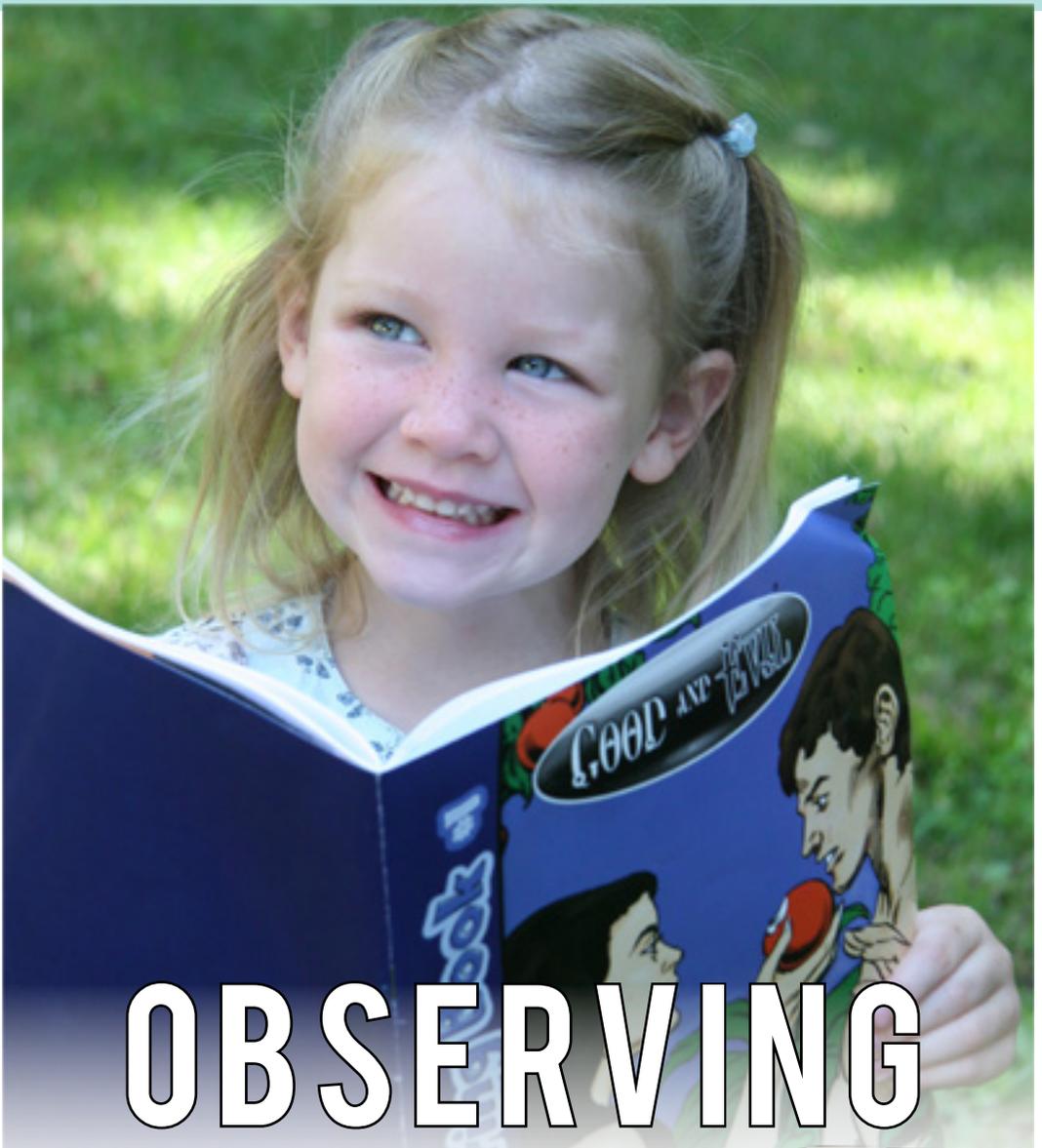
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OBSERVING THE PROCESS

Isn't There Any More?



A loud, enthusiastically depressed sigh interrupted my work at the table where Sarah and I were discussing good stories versus bad stories while we cut up carrots for lunch. I looked toward the couch to see Seric (4) wagging his head woefully

while he scribbled on his notebook in rapid frustration.

“Isn’t there any more?” He asked dramatically, glancing up to see if he’d caught my attention yet or not. I took the bait.

“Any more what?”

“All I can do is write my name and the ABCs. After that all there is, is scribbles!” He turned his notebook around for me to see.

Sure enough, he had printed his name clearly, followed by the ABCs—with the perennial upside-down M—and then scribbles, repeated again and again. He turned the page with a sad look to show me the same song, second verse on the next page.

“Isn’t there any more?” He repeated coming over to the table to lean against me with dramatic despair. Everything about Seric is dramatic and loud. I can’t even remember how boring life must have been before he arrived.

“Sure there’s more. Here, try this: H-I D-A-D. That says ‘Hi Dad.’ You can write him a note and give it to him. He’ll be amazed. And this says Mom: M-O-M. So now you can write HI DAD and HI MOM.” I handed the notebook back to him.

He quickly wrote **HI DAD** and **MOM** but didn’t look very thrilled about it.

“What else would you like to know?” I asked.

“I wish I could write HI DAD-DIO.” He confessed as though it were comparable to climbing Mount Everest. I laughed and added an extra DIO on the end of his note.

“Well, here you go. That says Daddio.”

“Oh.” Seric appeared disgruntled that his heart’s desire had been so easy to achieve. He wanted

something truly difficult to tackle.

“Can’t we start *100 Easy Lessons* now? I can do it. I can already read anyway. Well, not really. But really I can. So can we?”

Seric was letting me know he was ready. The older three had all come to that point at one time or another. David was the latest in age to want to read, at seven years old, and now Seric is the youngest at four years old.

This dichotomy between my two boys fascinated me. David, the late reader, was talking in complete



sentences before he was two years old. He had a dozen-word vocabulary by the time he turned one year old. I was sure he was a genius and would be reading by the time he was four. But he only began to go through the *100 Lessons* book when he was seven years old and finished it when he was nearly nine.

Seric, on the other hand, could not say a word before he turned two. I worried that he was going to be my slow learner. But then he went from not speaking at all to using words like fabulous, suffocate, and



technique in just a few months. And now, at four, he was ready to start learning to read and had already taught himself a few words.

I am reminded again not to assume anything about a student until it's all said and done, and even then to wait and see. Spoken summations like "she's good at reading, but bad at math," should be swallowed down with a good dose of self-doubt; who am I to say what another person was created to be?

When I hear a child label himself in frustration with "I'm terrible at spelling!" my response is typically along the lines of, "It's true that some people are better at some things than others, but often there is a reason why—a secret to their success. So let's find a way that works for you. Think about words that you do remember and ask yourself why you remember how those words are spelled. Do you picture the way they look written in your head? Do you think of how the spelling sounds when spoken? What helps you remember those words?"

And although one student does do better at math or spelling than another student, they all learn to look for methods that work for them rather than shutting down in areas they feel insecure about. The absence of fear and hopelessness gives the art of learning a wide berth, room to discover and grow.

I have met very few people with this freedom of mind. Most wear the chains of stereotyping put on

DID YOU KNOW?

You can purchase *Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons* and *The Da Vinci Road* at **No Greater Joy's Amazon Store!**

amazon.com/shop/nogreaterjoy

The absence of fear and hopelessness gives the art of learning a wide berth

them from their parents, teachers, and friends. If you are one of these, throw off your chains by observing yourself. See what is true and what is not. Then you can set about climbing those insurmountable mountains of “I can’t” and conquer them in time.

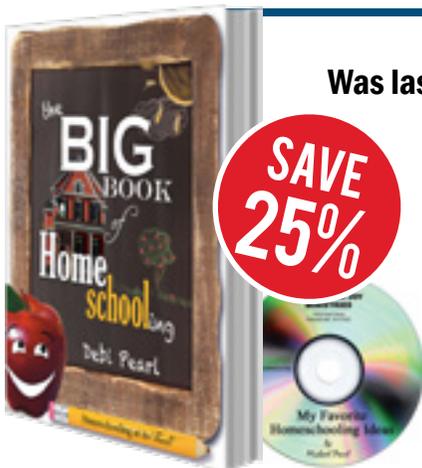
And if you truly are weak in an area, then you will know it in a pragmatic sense that frees you to compensate rather than fail.

Seric was waiting for my response. When they are ready, I’m ready.

“Yes, Seric. We can start *100 Easy Lessons*. But not this minute. Maybe this afternoon.”

“I want chocolate cake at my *100 Easy Lessons* graduation party,” said Seric. “And coconut cake. Cuz I love chocolate cake and coconut cake.” ■

Observing the Process is a chapter from the book *The Da Vinci Road: Observation and the Art of Learning*, by Rebekah Rising. Find out more at www.risingcuriosity.com



Was last year's homeschooling a drag?

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GEARING UP FOR HOMESCHOOLING

We are gearing up for another homeschooling year. **WOW!** It is not always easy or even pretty. With six children there is plenty of noise, movement, and wiggles, but after eight years I can say it is worth every moment!



By
Shalom
Brand
(our middle
daughter)

This year I will be teaching K–8th grades, plus have two toddlers in tow. That is a wide range of education and it will be a challenge. We also have a wide range of learning styles.

My daughter Grace is starting 8th grade. She likes—almost needs—strict order. She wants set hours, work, and books. My next daughter is an artist and a complete free spirit. You might know that my mom, Debi Pearl, taught all her children with the free-spirit style. I have enjoyed finding balance. For my strict order child, I follow the curriculum like the letter of the law.

The other six children are all like me—they love sand, flour, colors, blocks, and fun. They make science explosions and maps from clay, paint pictures, and write stories based on plays they are producing. And while they are having these days of fun, they are learning to read, write, and do math.

This year we will use some ACE paces and Math-U-See™ blocks. We will read stories from the older children's paces to the little ones, which teaches the older children to read aloud and the younger ones to listen. It also teaches the older children how to answer questions from the little ones and causes the readers to pay attention to what they are



reading. Involving all the children in each others' schooling is a healthy relationship builder. Every day there will be activities based on the day's lesson, but we will change them up as it suits our family.

Here are my tips for homeschooling in 2018:

#1 RELAX.

Homeschooling should not be a burden, and if you miss a day, the world will not end and your child will not be ruined. Again, I say RELAX. Everything that could be done wrong in homeschooling has already been done by parents before you. And guess what—their kids grew up to get a college degree and are now happily married, expecting their tenth kid, and can't remember beans

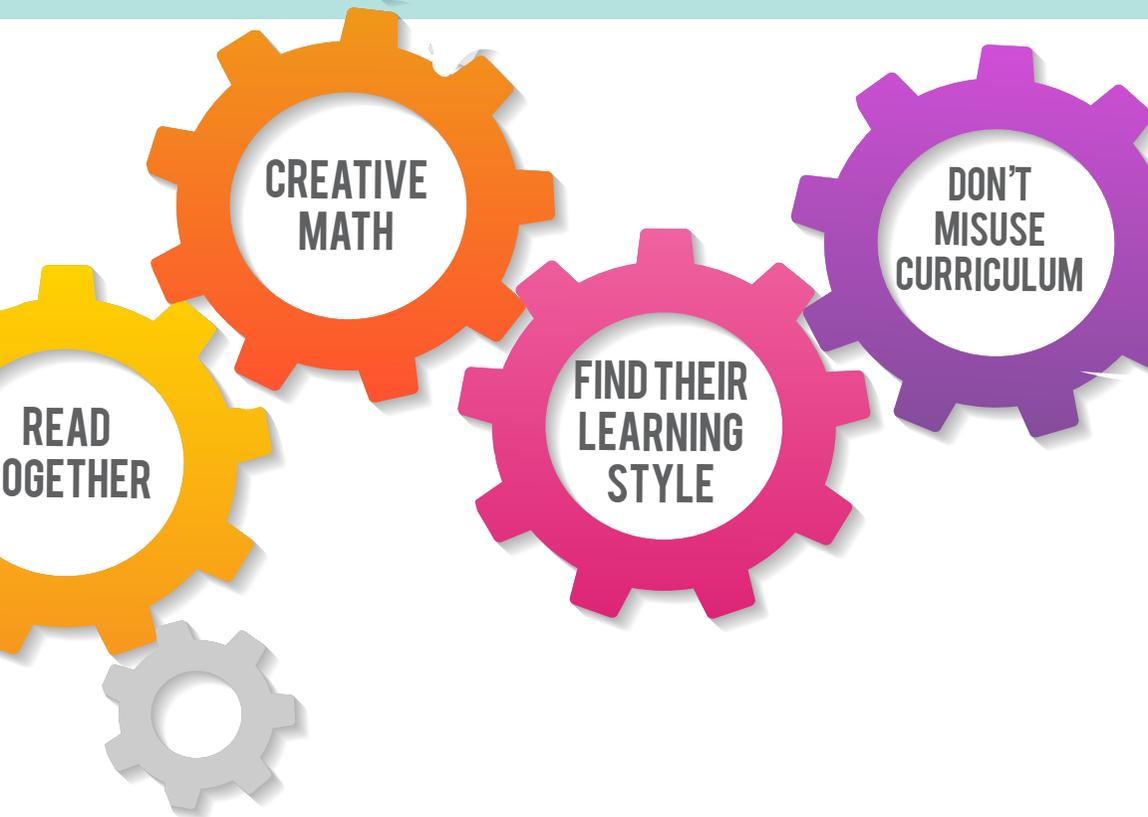
about their lessons when their mama was having a breakdown because... You get my drift? We mamas tend to feel that what we are doing right here, right now is so important that we can't relax, but we must.

#2 ENJOY YOUR CHILDREN.

Spend school time having a good time. It will quickly become a good habit.

#3 LEARN TOGETHER.

When I look back to my own years of being homeschooled, I remember we did so much learning together, doing many projects and having fun with Mom. Learning together is multiplying memories.



**CREATIVE
MATH**

**DON'T
MISUSE
CURRICULUM**

**READ
TOGETHER**

**FIND THEIR
LEARNING
STYLE**

#4 READ TOGETHER.

I know families where everyone breaks up and goes their separate ways to do their reading alone. They are missing so much! When you read together you are going on an adventure together. Your older children will be the leaders of the adventure because they are reading to the little ones. **READ TOGETHER!**

#5 Make sure you do math in a CREATIVE MANNER.

Use blocks, steps, money, time—anything that allows the children to actually **SEE** what math is doing. It makes bookwork a breeze.

#6 FIND YOUR CHILD'S STYLE and do it **THEIR** way.

If you have a strict-order child, then let them set the pattern they feel comfortable with. If you have free-spirited children but are a strict-order parent, then **GROW** with your child and learn to enjoy the other side of the mountain!

#7 DON'T LET CURRICULUM...

...destroy your relationship with your child, thus making your school days miserable! I like to say, “Use curriculum; don’t let curriculum **USE** you.”

Remember that education can’t happen in a stressed environment. Learn to relax and enjoy your family, and learning will be natural. ■

A photograph of a brown bear cub climbing a tree trunk. The cub is positioned on the left side of the frame, clinging to the bark with its paws. The tree trunk is light brown with a rough, textured surface. The background is a solid green color.

THE FULL TREE

By Gabe Pearl (our oldest son)

Nature teaches some important lessons and none better than one we can learn from the bear. I have great respect for bears. With their quick paws, they can snatch fish and seals from the water. Tropical bears climb trees to drag monkeys from their safe perch. Bears don't even think twice about digging into an angry beehive. I guess you could say they have us humans beat in every physical respect. And, if you think that's bad, it's not even the worst; they have a temper that far exceeds their physical strength, which you will experience just trying to get close to one of their young. All predators instinctively know bear cubs are off limits.

L BEAR

T M E N T

The Coyote

This past winter I was sitting up in my tree stand, deer hunting. Suddenly, from around the edge of the hill a deer came running. In one smooth motion I brought my gun up and flipped the safety off. As the deer got close, I realized it was just a fawn. Some hunters would be bummed at this point, but I was stoked because there is only one reason a fawn runs—coyotes. I remained still. Sure enough, the predator came running, about a hundred yards back. Needless to say, it never knew what hit it. One second, it was trying to take down a little fawn that got separated from its mother; the next moment, it was as dead as a tanned hide hanging on the wall. Coyotes are cowards, picking on the small and weak.

The Human Coyote

When I was 11 years old, I went on a mule ride with my grandparents.

It was a weekend of true hillbilly fun, riding mules in the summer heat all day long with a bunch of tobacco-chewing, overall-wearing, heehaw-looking good ole boys. It was a great time. On the second day, I met a gentleman about 55 years old. He spoke well, was clean-cut, and was better dressed than the rest of the bunch. He seemed to know my family and talked about my mom. He was definitely a good man. He said there was a nice trail around the lake that we could walk around first thing in the morning, and that we would see lots of snakes and turtles. That was all I needed to know. The next morning at daylight he tapped on my tent. I was up in a second and ready to go. It took about an hour and a half to walk around the lake. We had a great time, but I only saw one snake.

When I got home, I told my parents how much fun we'd had riding mules, catching perch, walking

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around the lake. “Walking around the lake?” they asked. “Yeah, I met this really nice old guy. We walked around the lake. It’s OK, he knows you. His name is so and so.” Their faces turned ash gray and I knew it was serious. They said he was a pedophile from way back. Other kids had charged him, but nothing had ever stuck, and they had not seen him in years.

It wasn’t until a couple of years ago that I thought back on that time at the mule ride and considered the gravity of the situation. Was I not his type? I doubt it. I was just a “cub” and he was a seasoned coyote. So why did I go unscathed? It’s pretty clear to me now. It’s because I was a cub and not a fawn. Sure, the cub might have wandered away from the den for the weekend, but nature itself teaches the coyote that there is not a tree high enough, nor water deep enough, nor any other way to outrun the wrath of the bear—my parents. Their reputations were known abroad, and the coyote knew that to mess with this cub was a sure way to lose what he loved most—and I don’t mean his freedom.

Some of you have fawns for children, and some of you have cubs. There is a big difference between the two in the mind of a coyote. Fawns are easy prey, and there are no consequences to the coyote if he eats one. But a bear will have no mercy on the creature that tries to take down its cub.

Our job as parents is to raise our kids to have a joy-filled life, not a life of shame and guilt brought on by a moment of gratification for some low-life you thought you could trust.

The coyote population multiplies in the years when there is a lot of food; that is what has happened in the current generation. Filth has permeated the whole world and there is much food for predators’ lust, thus they have multiplied. Coyotes are everywhere. They are stalking your children even as you read this warning.

As parents it is our responsibility to teach and warn our children, but we also need to be known as bears. People need to know, and coyotes need to know: If you mess with my cub, you get the full bear treatment. ■

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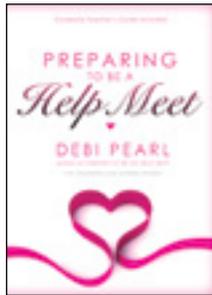
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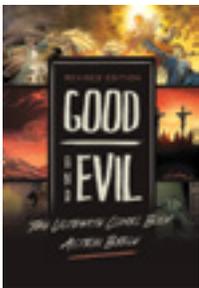
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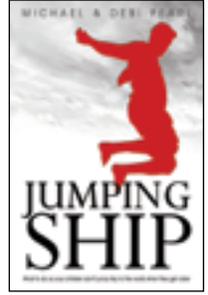
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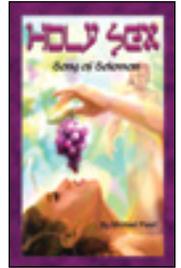


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FAMILY TOPICS

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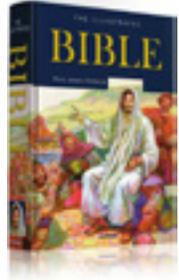
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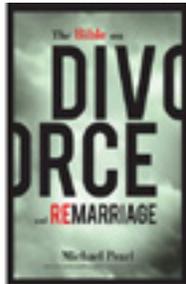
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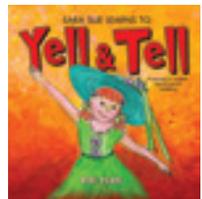
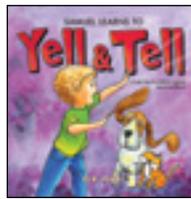
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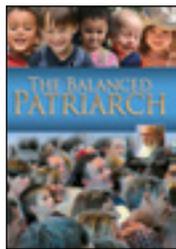
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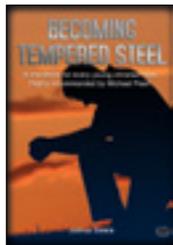
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A hands-on DVD about herbs. Shoshanna will take you into the wild, teach you to identify herbs, explain what they can be used for, and how to make a remedy out of them. Learn how truly simple it is to use herbs. 75 min.



5710-75 1 DVD **\$24.95**

Good and Evil Animated Series

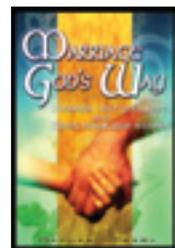
The Good and Evil Graphic Novel - now as a professionally animated video series! Over 7 hours of dramatic content that will engage any viewer, any age.



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Marriage God's Way *Husbands and Wives*

Husbands, learn how to sanctify your wife and cleanse her of spots, wrinkles, and blemishes. You have the power to bring your wife into the fullness of all that God intended her to be. Wives, learn the freedom of honoring and ministering to your man. Help him become all that God intended him to be. 184 min.

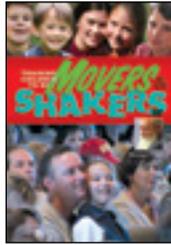


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FAMILY DVDS

Movers & Shakers

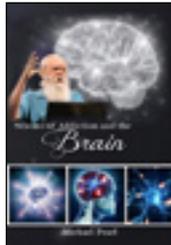
Michael encourages parents to train their children to be tomorrow's movers and shakers. Teach them to become leaders, entrepreneurs, statesmen—framers of tomorrow. 50 min.



6113-75 1 DVD **\$12.95**

Science of Addiction and the Brain

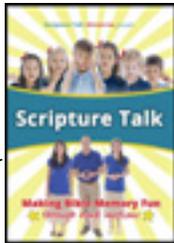
Addiction is the state of being enslaved to a substance or habit. At the 2014 Smoky Mountains Shindig, Michael delivered five packed messages supported by 185 animated PowerPoint™ slides on this subject.



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Scripture Talk

Scripture Talk combines hand motions, visual aids, and creative teaching to equip children of all ages to hide over 70 Bible verses in their hearts, and apply it to their lives! All Scripture is from the King James version.



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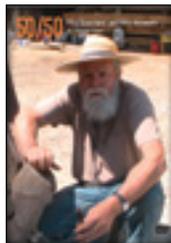
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50 Questions 50 Answers

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Homesteading for Beginners 1-4

Journey with this family as they share some basic homesteading skills. Teaches you basics like gardening, raising and butchering chickens, cutting firewood, baking bread, making cheese, making maple syrup, soda bread, vinegar, yogurt, and a variety of other homesteading skills. Excellent step-by-step instructions for the novice homesteader.

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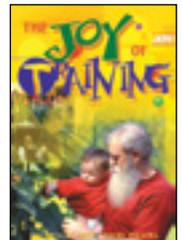
In this seminar, Michael Pearl uses humorous stories and practical examples to illustrate the simple process of training your children to work without complaint. Cut into his speaking presentation are hundreds of video clips and photos that help illustrate his message. Debi says, "The introduction is just too fun to miss!" 119 min.



8500-00 2-DVD Set..... **\$19.95**

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Michael and Debi Pearl tell how they successfully trained up their five children with love, humor, the rod, and a King James Bible. This set contains hundreds of snapshots and video clips of family and children, illustrating the things being taught. 180 min.



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BIBLE TOPICS



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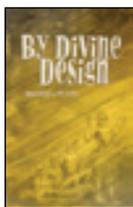
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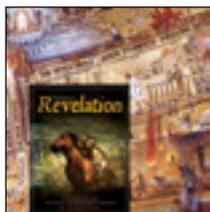
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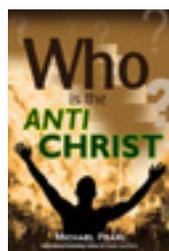
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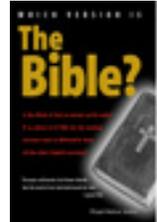
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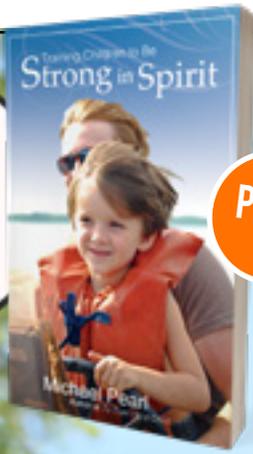
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