

Deuteronomy 1:21

Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

Inside this Issue

Nancy in the
Neighborhood

Renewing the Vision

The Rightly Ordered Life

Maintaining the Vision

The Focused Family

Character Corner

Decently and in Order

Making a Difference

The Forgotten Key to
Discipleship

Better Than Average

New Blessings

"Having many children has not limited my horizon at all, but instead broadened it! I have the privilege to nurture and educate eleven children... Our nine sons are growing into fine young men preparing to face the world as ambassadors for Christ ... our daughters are gracious yet competent... The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. PS 16:6"

M.D.



Passing on Memes

We've all heard of passing on genes to our children but what about memes? Just as genes are a unit of biological transmission which determines things like hair and eye color, a meme is defined as "a unit of cultural transmission." Coined by Biologist Richard Dawkins, it describes "how things like ideas or a particular way of performing a task leaps from one brain to another brain in a society."

Effective parenting is ensuring your cultural memes are passed on to your children. It is sobering to realize that those who do not hold a strong Christian worldview are also seeking to pass their memes on to others to insure their perpetuation. Because many of these individuals have small or no families, they are forced to find other avenues in which to ensure their memes continue. The two most effective tools in doing so are public education and the media.

Ideas, or memes, determine much about our moral fabric. The continuation of conservative pro-family memes is determined by the unwavering effort of parents who willingly accept children from the Lord then tirelessly train them up with the character, discipline, and principles outlined in scripture. Since culture is religion externalized, the type of culture we live in tomorrow is directly related to the success of parents to pass on their conservative memes to the next

generation.

Are you winning the meme war in your family?

First, talk to your children and listen to them. Have you effectively communicated your Christian beliefs to them? Remember that true success in this area is not measured by your children's actions today but those of your grand children tomorrow. Are your children so secure in their Christian beliefs as to unerringly pass them along to yet another generation?

Realize that character is more important than intellect. Imparting character to our children should be of vital importance to every parent. As busy parents, it is easy to disregard such an important subject. The most effective way to teach this important element of your children's education is by modeling it. If your children are not reflecting good character in their lives, it is time for a reality check. Invite your older children and spouse to point out any hypocritical areas that may be present in your life. This can be a humbling experience, but in the end it will make your home a more consistent and Godly place.

Finally, realize that God's command to "be fruitful and multiply" is still in effect. Couples often take their contraceptive cues from



the world. Many disappointed couples are shocked to discover they have fertility issues because they chose to delay child-bearing. Others either delay or cut off child bearing because of monetary concerns... or fear. Yet we are reminded numerous times in the scriptures to "fear not".

Limiting family size is also contrary to the grace given by God for marriage. We find this in 1 Peter 3:7 where couples are to be "heirs together of the grace of life". Children are a blessing from God according to the Bible- regardless of what the culture says (Ps 127:3). Nevertheless, having them is only the beginning. This world is filled with many pitfalls and dangers that are designed to "destroy the Godly seed". Be alert. Keep close tabs on your flock and train them in the way they should go.

Courageous couples, who dare to rear up large God fearing families in the face of cultural challenges, are reaping great rewards.

"Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate..." Genesis 24:60



"Children thrive when they have an involved father—someone who loves them, knows them, guides them, and helps them achieve their destiny."

Louisiana Family Forum

Nancy in the Neighborhood

We are excited about a new program designed to help you spread the light of God's truth to your friends and neighbors. Louisiana Above Rubies is offering Nancy's four hour video "Reclaiming God's Plan for Women" to families with a heart for ministry during the months of July and August. This is a great way to expand your family's ministry in your neighborhood.

We offer a number of services to help you to be successful. We have full color brochures, internet and email advertising, and even workers to help with a Character camp.

If your family would like to encourage mothers and strengthen families this summer contact us.

There is no cost to the host family.

"Nancy's message is just great. It answers so many questions."

"I've been looking for something like this for a long time. Every woman needs to hear this."

"I am so excited about this video. I can't wait to show this to my family."

"What I like about Nancy's message is that it's based on the truth of God's word. You just can't argue with that."



Where: First Baptist Church of Gonzales

When: September 22, 2007

Time: 8:00 am- 4:30 pm

For more information visit our website:

<http://www.laaboveubies.org>

RV "Finishing Strong"

As the visitor slowly opened the door she braced herself for a chaotic greeting from the homeschooling family of eight. Instead, she was met with a peaceful, calm atmosphere that was diametrically opposed to the last encounter. Why the change? This insightful mother had searched for and found the source of her children's uncontrollable behavior. She then eradicated it and replaced it with something far superior. This enemy within

lurks in many Christian homes stealing the hearts of children and dulling the light of their eyes. At the next Renewing the Vision we will help you discern if your home contains this enemy and what to do about it.

Lela Decoteau (22) will be speaking to the young girls, encouraging them to love the Lord with all their hearts and to develop a closer relationship with their parents.

The Rightly Ordered Life

One of the joys of homeschooling is its capacity to maintain a rightly ordered life. Education and life appear to flow seamlessly together in the weave of daily living. Only in the home are parents able to erase the lines that separate "school work" and "everything else".

Because of home schooling's unique advantage, the three R's often take on a different style. In addition to a nominal amount of seat work, students enjoy an extensive array of casual learning activities.

Reading is enriched through reading the

newspaper, product labels, directions, or enjoyable magazines. Children practice writing by sending letters to family or soldiers in Iraq. Extra math practice comes from counting out the places for supper, calculating the most valuable coupons or the best prices at the supermarket.

Maintaining the Vision

When I was young, I often felt there was nothing left for the second generation to do, except "keep Christianity in the family." I felt like my parents had already done all the pioneer work. They were both saved out of non-Christian homes, and had to figure out how to build a Christian family from scratch. All the excitement and adventure and discovery was theirs; our job was just to keep from dropping the ball, and keep our children from going back into the world.

... Our parents had to fight for the right to raise their children to be soldiers. Now it's our duty as soldiers to win the war, ours and our descendants'. Everything our parents have done doesn't give us less to do — it gives us more to do. Luke 12:48 says, "...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

The duty of all second-generation Christians is to stand on their parents' shoulders and succeed them; to go further and conquer new ground — to make new biblical discoveries, to reach greater heights of theological precision, to root out even more worldliness of thinking and living, to have more obedient Christian

families, and to extend Christ's dominion into every nation. And this will leave plenty for our children to do, and even our great-great-grandchildren.

In the beginning of my speech, I talked about our generation. It is perverse. It is odious to God. He is grieved and offended by it. But God had a purpose in putting us into it. Abigail Adams wrote to her son John Quincy:

These are times in which a genius would wish to live. It is not in the still calm of life, or in the repose of a pacific station, that great characters are formed. The habits of a vigorous mind are formed in contending with difficulties. Great necessities call out great virtues.

As you learn more about our evil world, it's right that you should be repulsed by it, but it would be wrong for you to be afraid of it. Because one day, Lord willing, your thousands of millions of descendants will possess its gates.

Excerpt from a speech given by Anna Sofia Botkin to encourage second generation young people.



The Focused Family

by Cindy Stermer

"The hunt" was a frequent occurrence in my husband's life. The cutting briars, the annoying mosquitoes, and the sweltering heat were ignored as he, his father, and other relatives trailed after the dogs that avidly pursued their prey in undistracted oneness. They were intently focused and united for one purpose: finding a rabbit. In the woods, that efficient team fulfilled its purpose by finding numerous rabbits, but while in the pen, their

behavior was so violent that you would never have believed they were worth anything. They would constantly fight over food, territory, and attention.

Even though we're not dogs hunting for rabbits, in order for our family to work most efficiently as a team it is essential that we are collectively focused on our eternal purpose (2Tim. 2:4-7, 1 Cor.3:9-15).

Sometimes daily tasks drown out our spiritual purpose of being a parent.

Parents are called to rear up a mighty army for the Lord (Ps. 127:4). Good soldiers that are doing what they were created to do don't just defend their territory in fear. No. They courageously take ground from the enemy!

Are you wondering what your family's purpose is? To find it, begin with praying together as a couple. You could also ask your pastor to guide you and your family into the ministry God has created for you (Eph. 4:11, Heb. 13:17).

Opportunities abound whether in the church, government or community. Your family may feel drawn towards evangelizing, equipping the believers, or serving the poor. Guard against becoming inwardly focused at home by spending valuable time and resources on fruitless activities. The Lord calls us to be a witness to the world (Phil.2:3-4, 1 John 3:18-19).

Let's stop solely defending our territory. Let's gather our army, pick up our weapons, and join the hunt for souls.

Character Corner

CONTENTMENT

The park was alive with parents and children. The company picnic was a huge success. Now it was time to redeem our food tickets. In the midst of the frustrated parents and demanding children one table caught my eye. Seated quietly around it were nine happy siblings from toddler to teen awaiting their meal. I watched as the happy relaxed parents made their way through the long winding food line. A full thirty minutes later, when they emerged with lunch, the children were still happily waiting.

Contentment is contrary to human nature and must be diligently taught. The rewards to parents who conscientiously labor to instill contentment in their children, however, are great indeed. Their children are happy, non-demanding, and giving. They also tend to be more satisfied in their spiritual walk & marriages.

The key to learning contentment is in 1 Tim. 6:8 "And having food and raiment let us be there with content". If contentment is not obtained with the

basics, additional possessions will never bring it about.

Wise parents know that denying indulgences is one of the greatest gifts they can give their child.

Babies can be trained in contentment by the blanket method. Place them on a blanket or in a play pen with a couple of standard toys for a set amount of time. Start with only a few minutes then work up to longer periods of time.

Many parents have learned that by refusing to

give gifts arbitrarily to all the children when only one child is deserving, gives ample opportunity for the "neglected" children to practice being content.

Contented children can agree with Paul "...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, there with to be content."

Contentment frees the individual to focus on eternal treasures rather than earthly cares.

Next to faith, this is the highest art: to be content in the calling in which God has placed you. Martin Luther



Decently and in Order

Crayons, pencils, pens, paper clips, the list goes on for essential homeschooling tools. But with an ever growing family and so much to do, it is crucial that even the most minute item be quickly found and well out of the reach of curious toddlers. Summer is the best time to organize these sundry items. Small plastic bins work well. Be sure they are clear, have tight fitting

lids and are clearly labeled. It's a great project for elementary age children.

A convenient shelf nearby the school work area will keep them readily accessible.

By giving these small necessities a designated place, it is easy for even the youngest student to help maintain a home that is decent and in order.

Making a Difference

Highlighted in a new report by David Barton's Wallbuilders ministry is the significant change currently underway in the federal judiciary. Barton finds that there is a direct correlation between this result and increased evangelical voter turnout in recent elections. The election of pro-life U. S. Congressmen

and U.S. Senators resulted in the confirmation of two pro-life Supreme Court justices and dozens of lower federal court judges, as well as several pro-life bills. The Christian vote is making a significant impact. Remember that elections have a direct impact on so many issues rarely

mentioned by the media, such as pro-family legislation and the confirmation of judges. So don't be discouraged by negative news. "Christians must therefore remain faithfully involved at the ballot box", says Barton. "Good things are happening! Therefore, be encouraged to engage in

upcoming elections! Their results will determine whether America will keep moving forward in winning the culture war, or whether we will start retreating. Be active! Much is at stake!"

I wonder what impact Christian families would have if they did more for candidates than just vote.....?

The Forgotten Key to Discipleship

As concerning the education of our children Jesus made a profound statement. "A student is not above his teacher, but when he is fully trained, he will be like his teacher." This raises one of the most vital questions any Christian parent will face concerning the discipleship of their children. Whom will your children resemble at the conclusion of their "formal" education?

The Great Commission challenges us to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit, *teaching them to obey all that I commanded you...*"

An important question to ask is... Is the teacher or method of teaching I've chosen for my child helping

me fulfill my duty as described in this verse to teach them to understand and obey Christ's commands? When evaluating any educational system or teacher consider the following:

Worldview Development

And do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Rom. 12:2

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men,... and not after Christ. Col. 2:8

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust *avoiding worldly, empty chatter...* 1 Tim. 6:20-21

Morality

Be not deceived: *bad companionship* corrupts good manners. 1 Cor. 15:33

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness... 2 Cor. 6:14-15

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night ... Ps 1

According to this passage an individual's success is directly related to the quality of people he associates with on a daily basis. More importantly, that he has ample opportunity to engraft and meditate on God's word.



"...there is a big difference between sending "fully trained" disciples into enemy territory and sending our recruits to our enemy's training camp. If we do the latter, we shouldn't be surprised when our children come home wearing the enemy's uniform and charging the hill of our home while waving an enemy flag".

Dr. Voddie Baucham, on choosing an education venue for ones children.

Better than Average

"Normal! Why who wants to be normal. That's no more than a setting on a dryer", exhorted the speaker in an effort to motivate young people to pattern their lives after God's higher standard.

With only 2% of Christian teens, according to George Barna, possessing a Biblical Worldview, it appears that being abnormal is not such a bad idea.

A worldview is a comprehensive interpretation of the world and our lives. It shapes

what we think, say, and do. These assumptions come from many places, such as television, magazines and those who taught us as children. Having a Biblical worldview allows the individual to measure new information according to the standard of Biblical truth. The opposite of Biblical worldview is a secular humanist worldview (man is the center of all knowledge).

Individuals who hold a Biblical worldview are able to watch television, read

magazines and surf the internet with Godly discernment. Just as a counterfeit expert can quickly expose a fake, so are they able to distinguish easily from Biblical truth and error.

God is calling parents to learn and teach His principles and proclaim His power to the next generation. "That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God but keep His commandments." Psalms 78:7

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*Strengthening families
across Louisiana.*



We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.laaboveubies.org

New Blessings



Bobby and Sherry Arnold welcome their 1st grandchild, Andrew Austin Beasely, born February 3, 2007.

Hector and Emily Barberena welcome their 3rd child, Ruben Enrique, born February 6, 2007 weighing 9lbs and 21 inches long. He was born at home.

Amy and Patrick Pezant welcome their 8th child, David Edwin, born March 19, 2007. He weighed 7lb 8oz and was 19 ½ inches long.

Ron and Jodi Townley welcome their 8th child, Victoria Olivia, February 25, 2007. She weighed 7lb 11oz and was 19 ½ inches long.

LA Homeschool Stats

Family Demographics

98% married couple families
90.2% mothers are home full time
2004 median household income \$50,000-\$54,999
2004 average spending per pupil \$400-\$500 per year
78% attend Sunday School or other religious classes

Academic Performance

79th percentile Math
80th percentile Social Studies
81st percentile Science
82nd percentile Reading
82nd percentile Language
72% enrolled in higher ed.
LFF Ed. Resource Council

Tidbits

Did you know that you can submit your voter registrations at age 17? You can't vote until age 18 but it is good to get the paper work finished ahead of time so you are able to fulfill your constitutional duty when the time comes.

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