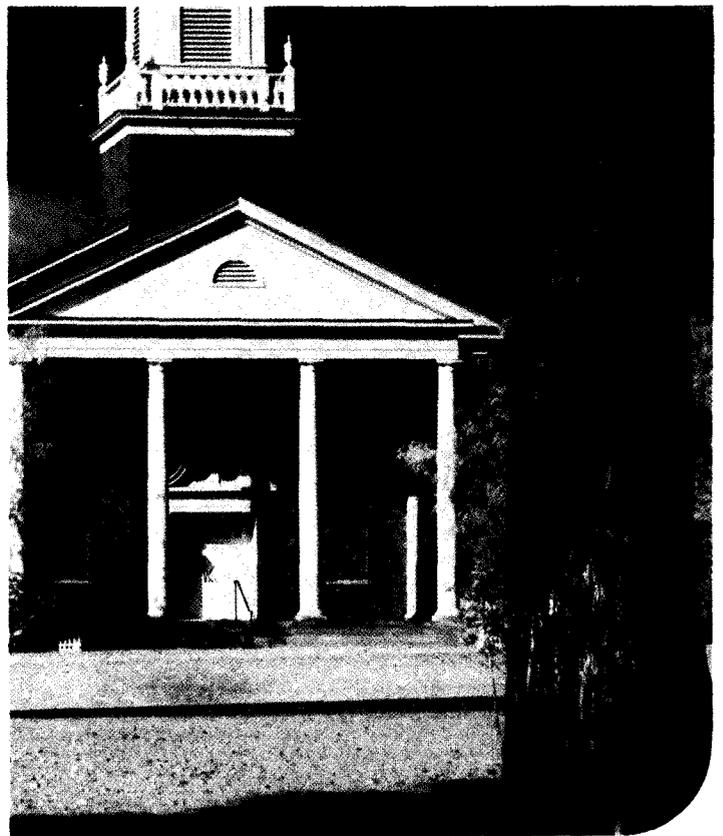
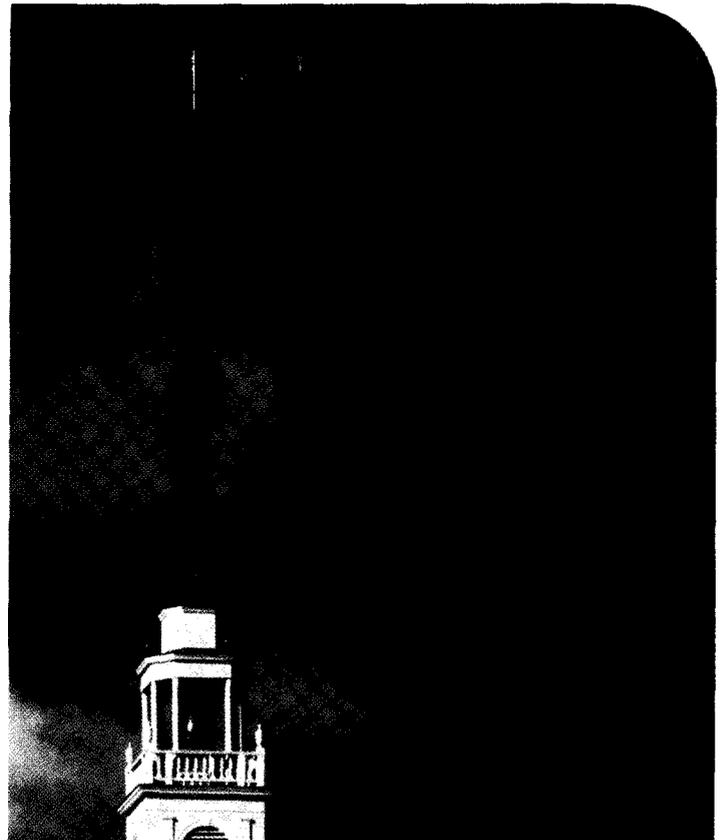


# The Presbyterian Guardian

IN THIS ISSUE:



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## IN THIS ISSUE

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No Christian parents living in the latter half of the twentieth century can be unconcerned about the education of their children. As contemporary society becomes increasingly governed by materialistic and atheistic values, so does our education system. It is almost incredible that only some fifty years ago a man could be tried for teaching the theory of evolution to school-children. Now almost the reverse is the case. In England recently a head teacher of religious education was dismissed from his post for teaching the Genesis account of creation. In the United States Bible instruction has long been banned from public schools and since 1963 school prayers have also been prohibited.

More and more, Christian parents are beginning to wonder if turning their

children over to the public school system is not in fact turning them over to the enemy of their souls. Education cannot be neutral. It is essentially religious, either for or against God. Recently an attempt was made in Pennsylvania courts to have the parents of Christian children exempted from paying tax for public schools on the premise that the public schools engaged in religious indoctrination.

The Bible has a great deal to say on the subject of education. Christian nurture begins in the home and Christian schools should only be an extension of parental authority; certainly they should not replace it. One is to instruct one's children in the ways of the Lord as one sits in the house, walks by the way, lies down and rises up (Deuteronomy 6:7). In other words, Christian education is a way of life and encompasses all of life, mathematics and history as much as Bible instruction.

Recognizing the paramount importance of Christian education and the centrality of the family in this, the current issue of *The Guardian* has been given over to articles dealing with these matters. The first article, "Worship as a Way of Life", by Richard G. Watson, focuses on

the centrality of Christian education, both formal and informal, in the home. An anonymous article entitled "He is Also Able" pinpoints the devastation and heartache caused by rebellion in the family. But it also points to the sovereignty of God as the only hope for the human situation. A revealing and provocative survey of the reading habits of teenagers is provided in "Scared of Books" by Julia Shaw, herself a teenage schoolgirl. The final article on "Ways of Having Family Worship" is by Paul G. Settle and is reprinted by permission from *The Journal of Pastoral Practice*. We are also printing *Twelve Rules For Raising Delinquent Children*, drawn up by the Police Department of Houston, Texas. They make telling reading!

These articles have been compiled by the Rev. Paul G. Settle of Greenville, South Carolina, and we wish to extend our thanks to him for the work he undertook on this project.

Since the study of the Scriptures is of central importance in Christian Education, we are also including an article on Bible study by the Rev. Joe Pipa. It is called "Some Tips on Cultivation" and is adapted with permission from *The PCA Messenger*.

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## News and Views

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### Westminster Seminary Commencement

Cheltenham Baptist Church in Jarrettsville, PA., was packed out for the Forty-ninth Commencement Exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary, on May 24, 1978. One hundred four students, received the degrees of Doctor of Ministry, Master of Theology, Master of Di-

ploma, and Master of Arts in Religion. The graduating class was the largest in Westminster's history. Three men received the Certificate of the Westminster Ministerial Institute (a program designed to further the theological education of pastors in the inner city.) Dr. Mariano Di Gangi, Professor of Pastoral Studies, Ontario Theological Seminary, delivered a powerful address on "The Christ Peter Preached" and Dr. Edmund Clowney, president of the Seminary, exhorted the graduates from Philippians 3:1, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord."

Theodore J. Pappas, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, announced the following new projects to be developed in the coming years: an independent center for urban ministry under the guidance of the Rev. William Krispin; an ex-

tension education center in south Florida, with the Rev. H. William Link as administrative director and Dr. James Hurley as Director of Studies; and the establishment of a Missions Research Center under the direction of Dr. Harvie Conn.

The following promotions were announced: D. Clair Davis, Dr. Theol. as Professor of Church History; Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., Th.D. as Professor of New Testament; and Robert B. Strimple, Th.D. as Professor of Systematic Theology. Dr. George C. Fuller was appointed as Director of the Doctor of Ministry program.

Visiting Professor Philip E. Hughes was granted a leave of absence for the

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*God's ideal: continuous instruction in the home . . .*

## **Worship As A Way of Life**

*Richard G. Watson*

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Silence and darkness were the most impressive features of our new home in the country. The familiar clanging of streetcars, the roar of city busses and the sound of footsteps on the sidewalk beside our big house on the corner were replaced by a still, deep silence. Our first night there was the most impressive as this silence was pierced only by the whistling of tree frogs, crickets and whippoorwills. Those unfamiliar sounds were more frightening than enchanting to an eleven year old who had known only the man-made noises of a busy city.

The house was without electricity, resulting in a black darkness. The streetlights that formerly brightened our front yard and shone into our windows every night would have brought comfort that first gloomy night in the country. Oil lamps provided just enough glow to cast spooky shadows on the walls that made dimly lit rooms more dreadful than the darkness.

The day's work ended, Mother sat in a rocking chair on the large front porch with ten of her eleven children gathered around.

"Someone get the Bible," she said.

June brought out our large family Bible, and Mother read a chapter and then prayed. She thanked God for our safe trip that day and for our new home, and she asked for blessings upon our future there. It was one of the most impressive times of worship in my whole life. This was not due to any form or ritual that was followed, but because of the personal need, the perfect timing and the spontaneity of the experience.

Family worship was not always a regularly scheduled activity in our home except for prayers before each meal. At times we followed a pattern of regular evening devotions with some success, but invariably the changing schedules of work and school in our large family would eventually interrupt our devotional time. Looking back, it seems clear that it was not the structured times of family devotions that had the greatest impact but the informal that became a way of life for us.

Sometimes individualized instruction in the faith was provided while I was drying dishes as my mother washed them. She would tell moving and interesting stories about how the Lord had worked in her life from an early age. These illustrations in godly living were more moving and impressive than those provided by the preacher in the course of delivering his weekly sermon. On the other hand, they complemented the ministry of the church and gave greater relevance to sermons and Bible lessons.

This type of continuous instruction in the home seems to be more in keeping with the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy than the more formalized and organized family devotions. The Scripture tells parents that they should have the words of God in their hearts, and it says, "you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up." (Deut. 6:7). This, with other instructions given in that chapter, makes it clear that Christian education and worship should be spontaneous and continuous.

Does this in any way suggest that regular times should not be set aside for daily family devotions? Of course, it does not! Regular morning or evening devotions will help greatly in fulfilling the duty laid upon parents regarding spiritual nurture for children.

It should be noted, however, that a brief period of worship with the children each day falls far short of fulfilling all that the Bible requires of parents in this matter. When the things of God are mentioned only in the context of formal worship, Christian training for children is being seriously neglected. Advantage must be taken of the many

other opportunities for Christian education.

As the family history is related to the children, is the providence of God made very clear? As past experiences of sickness and health, poverty and wealth are shared, are children told how the Lord answered many prayers and brought the family through these experiences? When present financial burdens or other family difficulties are discussed, are assurances of God's help also shared? These are questions which parents should consider very seriously because it is through such common, ordinary experiences of the family that faith in Christ has meaning and is seen as vital to every part of life. Children sometimes have a problem in receiving the truth of God at home when family worship or Bible study is followed immediately, or even the next day, by outbursts of anger or intemperate expressions on the part of parents. Yet, it is impossible to always avoid such offenses. When sin is followed, however, by proper expressions of repentance and apologies to the offender, children come to a better understanding of the nature and necessity of repentance, and an atmosphere of worship is restored in the home. It is not inappropriate for parents to humbly confess their own imperfections before their children in such cases.

It is always a temptation for us to cling to the formal expressions of faith and to neglect the informal expressions of our faith. The Pharisees held to the formal and structured practices such as the tithe but neglected the spontaneous responses such as mercy toward the poor and kindness toward widows. Jesus said, "these ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). This Scripture is not given in reference to worship in the home, but in a way it illustrates the point being made. That is, parents ought to provide many incidental lessons in godliness for children in the normal course of daily life and not to leave structured devotions undone.

Christian parents have an opportunity that is far beyond that available to the Sunday school teacher or preacher. It is easier for parents to teach their children how faith and life are inseparably bound together. They have the opportunity of presenting the ideal of worship as a way of life.

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*A troubled family learns that . . .*

## He Is Also Able

*Anonymous*

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The sky had never been a bluer hue! The air, never so crisp and fresh! The day, never lovelier! At least it appeared to be so through our eyes, for this was the day for which we had so long dreamed, planned and eagerly awaited—our wedding day!

God had so obviously brought the two of us together and had slowly developed what had begun as a friendship five years earlier into a deep, precious love. Marriage was a particularly big step for me, because, in one sweep, not only would I become Bryan's wife, but also the mother to his four children whom he had raised for seven years alone. Needless to say, we both wanted to be sure. As we continued to seek God's will, it became clearer and clearer that indeed "this was the Lord's doing and marvelous in our eyes." (Psalm 118:23) In fact, this verse became "ours" and was inscribed in our wedding rings. Little did we realize then how many times we were going to need to be reminded of it!

After three glorious weeks of honeymoon, we came back to what I dreamed would be our perfect little family—now complete. All that was lacking was the vine-covered cottage, the white picket fence, the rose-laden walkway, and the bow on the door! My bubbly dreams of that model little family suddenly burst when, upon our return, we were faced with the news that our son had been picked up by the police for "B and E." (Never having been involved with the police before, I had to learn a whole new slang vocabulary!) This Breaking and Entering charge was only the beginning!

Within the first three months of our marriage, Bryan or I were at the Juvenile Division five times with our son. Though he had been certainly less than angelic previously, it seemed as if he were now headed for trouble like a run-away horse rushing towards the edge of a cliff.

And to make matter worse, he was not the only one "active!" Two of our daughters began to perfect their little "con" game, deceiving us and black-mailing one another.

All of the children had made professions of faith years before. However, it became increasingly obvious that those words were meaningless and empty. The fruits by which Jesus said we shall know Christians were totally missing! Unharnessed tempers, lying, stealing, conniving—these were the only "fruits" evidenced! "Lord! What happened to the vine-covered cottage? It's become more like a live mine field with explosives bursting constantly around us! What are you doing, Lord? This isn't the way we planned it!" No—it wasn't what we had in mind, but it was certainly no surprise to our sovereign God who, in spite of it all, was still very much in control! He began to teach us this in a way that we had never experienced before.

Our greatest source of comfort and peace came from the Word of God. Though friends offered listening ears, shed empathizing tears, encouraged and supported us in prayer during these hard times, only the Lord Himself, through His Word, could reach down into the deep hurts of our souls and heal them. His promises became our foundation, and when we claimed them, they kept us from sinking.

"And we know that God causes *all* things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you . . ." (Isaiah 43:1, 2)

"Do not fear, I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will

uphold you with My righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

"Thou who hast showed me many troubles and distresses will revive me again." (Psalm 71:20)

Because I am unable to bear any children, one verse which has been particularly meaningful to me is Psalm 113:8:

"He makes the barren woman abide in the house as a joyful mother of children. Praise the Lord!"

How many times I have, with tears, reminded the Lord of that verse and committed our children once again to Him, asking that He work in their hearts both repentance and faith—that He might receive the glory and that my joy as a mother might be complete.

These and countless other promises became more than words—they were now reality! Though our hearts often were breaking, God began to teach us "In all things give thanks" (I Thessalonians 5:18)—no matter what the circumstances. It was always easy to thank Him after the waters had subsided and the sea was once again calm—but we began to learn, in a new way, that faith trusts and thanks Him *during* the storm, not just afterwards!

As we would think we had come to the place of *really* being able to trust Him, God would bring another "opportunity" into our lives for us to put into practice that which we had learned. One followed quickly upon the heels of another—our son continued his run-away course until he was sent to a home for boys; two of our daughters became pregnant within a year; our youngest daughter began to try to "parrot" her sisters' and brother's rebellious behavior—and it seemed as if our world was literally falling apart. There were times when we felt as if we were hanging to a cliff by our splintering fingernails. Those were the times when, through God's Word, the reality of His sovereignty was once again brought into focus—and with that, came His peace.

As we prayed, "Lord, do *anything* necessary to bring our children to You," we then had to be willing for Him to do just that! Often those things which seemed to

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A teenager explores why her peers are . . .

## Scared of Books

Julia Shaw

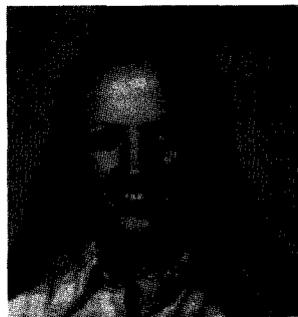


"Don't sign up for that class—you hafta read every night!" "You're right. Why doesn't she just show movies like a normal teacher?"

This is heard all too often at my high school. When given the writing assignment, "What Christian teenagers read", I asked myself the question and realized that I don't read, at least not to any great extent. I decided that I needed some data to really find out what high-schoolers read. I gave out a survey to a large variety of teenagers from ninth to twelfth grade. It was given to students from all types of backgrounds, both from Christian and public schools. I asked them questions like, "How much time do you spend reading?, How much time do you spend studying?, etc." The most interesting section was the books that had been recommended for other teens. These are listed at the end of the article. The opinions in this article are based on what I have read, heard, and seen among my friends.

Our first question should be, what does a teenager do with his time? This is an important indication of what he reads. Primarily, there is school. Extra-curricular activities such as sports, music, drama, and clubs can also fill up many students' free time. An after-school job may take up a few hours and of course, there is homework (or lack of it). The statistics here may surprise you: 44% studied for one hour or less. Several students studied for only a few minutes or not at all. Only a few studied for more than two hours. This will vary from area to area,

but your adolescent's free time is probably not spent with the books! Your children's time may be occupied by television. If this is the case, beware. I suspected that much time was being spent watching television since in many of my friends' homes, the TV is on all afternoon and evening. My statistics proved it. An outstanding 76% of the group interviewed watched television for one hour or more per day! Of that group, 47% sat in front of the television for two hours or more. Several teens watched television four or five hours per day. At this point, if your teenager is sitting in his room reading, he is in a definite minority. In an article about the power of television, in *Eternity* magazine, Mel White speaks of our dilemma, "We watch television as if we know of nothing else to do. We talk about being too tired or too poor or too disorganized to



Julia Shaw is a junior at Parkway West Senior High School and a member of Westminster RPC. She works at Clayton House, a retirement center, as a waitress and cook.

do anything else. In truth, we are too lazy."<sup>1</sup>

How much time do teenagers spend reading, then? I can only speak for volunteers in my area, but 58% read for one half hour per day or less! (including textbooks). The group was evenly divided. Either they were in the non-reading majority, or the few that said they loved to read did so around three or four hours a day.

Why aren't teens reading more? The easiest answer would be that they just don't want to. For some this may be true. However, I don't feel that a lack of desire for knowledge is the problem. In *Understanding the Adolescent* M.E. Soderholm says, "The high school pupil's new-found reasoning powers enable him to pursue studies of doctrine. He wants to know what Christians believe and why. He wants reasons for his faith. The simple answers he accepted when he was a child do not satisfy him now."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the adolescent needs answers. In one way the answers are being provided, though not from books. The answers come from television. (Remember, we did establish that 76% were watching TV for at least one hour per day.) Without too much effort or thinking, teenagers can blindly accept the ideals provided by their heroes. Mel White in his articles states it this way, "It is not the results of one program on one night that we need to fear. It is the steady bombardment of ideas and acts that run contrary to God's will for man. A regular diet of unworthy inputs can set the whole human system off balance. The general moral standard of the entire medium eventually gets to us and does its work."<sup>3</sup>

Now that we know why adolescents don't read we need to establish whose fault this is. Blame can easily be placed on the school system, for failing to emphasize the importance of reading. However, it is not the place of the school to even try to impress these standards. If it were, we could expect the Christian  
(continued on page 10)

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<sup>1</sup> Mel White *TV a Person Bender* *Eternity* magazine.

<sup>2</sup> Marjorie Elaine Soderholm *Understanding the Adolescent*.

<sup>3</sup> Mel White *op cit*.

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# Ways of Having Family Worship

Paul G. Settle

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*"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15*

The acts of worship most appropriate to the family are 1) the use of Scripture, 2) prayer, and 3) song. Care must be taken that the worship is really a family worship; that is, such as offers an opportunity for the children to express to God the adoration, love, and trust, which rise out of their own growing needs and capacities.

Because families usually gather for the morning and evening meals, family worship might most easily be held before or after breakfast, or before or after the evening meal. It may be better to gather in the living room where there is less disorder than in the dining room or den. However, your family schedule probably differs from others; simply try to arrange a time when everyone can be present on a regular basis. Be flexible.

Remember four general principles which ought to be observed in the worship of families in which there are children:

1. The worship program should be brief. The attention of young children cannot be held for very long.
2. Variety is needed. Variations which provide fresh and interesting ways of expressing the family adoration, love, and trust toward God will make your devotional season more vital to the children.
3. Participation of every member of the family is important. There must be opportunity for every person to

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share actively in the worship.

4. Adapt your worship program to the needs and capacities of the youngest participant. Its spirit should be essentially a spirit of childlike trust.

## The Use of Song

Children love to sing. The use of song is a vital element in successful family worship. Remember:

1. In families in which there are young children, children's hymns and choruses ought to be sung part of the time. Choose choruses wisely, making sure that the tunes are appropriate and that the lyrics are Scriptural. Some excellent 'Scripture choruses' are now available wherein the words of a Bible passage have been set to music.
2. The great hymns of the church should be used. Even small children should be given the opportunity to learn and love the great hymns which Christians have found to be a blessing and most suitable for their expressions of praise, love, and trust. (A hymnal which includes the very best hymns as well as songs for informal occasions is the *Trinity Hymnal*, which may be ordered from Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126.)

## The Use of Scripture

No program of worship is complete without the use of God's own Words, the Scriptures. A good way to secure variety and participation is for the father and mother to recite some suitable passage of Scripture. Sometimes, instead of repeating the whole passage, each member of the family may contribute a verse or verses.

The passages may also be read. As a general practice the reading of Scripture at family worship should be participated in by all. It is most fitting for the head of the family to read the passage, but on special occasions reading may be delegated to a child. Try reading some of the easier passages in unison, responsively, or verse about.

Sometimes Bible memory passages may be assigned. The passage then will be recited and discussed as the theme or

text for that particular program of worship.

Use one or more of the new Bible translations. The *King James Version* (KJV) is still the most widely used translation and its language is most beautiful and majestic. However, there are several excellent translations available that render the original languages into modern English. *The New American Standard Bible* (NASB) is a popular translation, faithful to the Greek and Hebrew, which has almost entirely replaced the KJV in collegiate ranks. The recently published *New International Version* of the New Testament (NIV) is thought by many Bible students to be "the best yet" and is expected to finally replace the KJV. Translators are presently working on the Old Testament portion. The NIV is a splendid version, quite readable, and true to the original languages. One of the most popular versions, but a dangerous one in the opinion of many Bible-believing scholars and students, is *The Living Bible*, a paraphrased edition of the Scriptures by Kenneth Taylor. *The Living Bible* is not a true translation, but a paraphrase which seeks to set forth the meaning of the words of Scripture rather than to give an exact translation from the original languages. The *Revised Standard Version* (RSV) is generally a good translation, but it cannot be recommended without reservation because of several mis-leading or erroneous renderings.

Wise parents will also encourage memorization and discussion of a catechism. Christians have used the catechetical method of teaching since New Testament times. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* is especially helpful as a summary of Bible doctrine. Young children will profit from "The Child's Catechism." (Both catechisms may be secured from Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126. A brief explanation of the *Shorter Catechism*, with questions for discussion, may also be purchased at the same address. Just ask for "Studies in the Catechism".)

## Prayer

Prayer in the family must be sincere (Matt. 6:5). Sincerity is necessary to true

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## Some Tips on Cultivation

by Joe Pipa

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Summer is approaching and many of us are taking inventory of the gardening tools, preparing flower beds, and plowing gardens. No, an article from *Farm Journal* hasn't slipped into *The Guardian*. I am not suggesting how to have a more successful garden, but I do want to consider cultivation—the cultivation of the human soul and mind.

The Christian is to grow and bear fruit. In order to do so, there are certain things one should practice to cultivate his spiritual character. One of the most important of these things is Bible study. If a Christian is to grow and bear fruit, he must be cultivating his soul and mind with the study of the Bible. Yet, even though most Christians recognize the importance of Bible study, many, perhaps the majority, do not regularly and consistently practice it.

Recently a survey on the subject was taken in a large adult Sunday school class. Although everyone agreed that Bible study was important, almost two-thirds of the class were not involved in it themselves.

Many attributed this neglect to problems related to the mechanics of studying the Bible. Some of the problems mentioned included lack of time, inability to understand what was read, ignorance of the proper tools, and ignorance of how to begin. These are common problems, but as surprising as it may be, there are some fairly simple solutions. Let's consider these solutions by using the analogy of planting a garden.

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Joe Pipa is a P.C.A. minister who writes for Great Commission Publications of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

As the time approaches for planting the garden, the first things you need to do is to take an inventory of your tools. There are the basic tools that all gardeners must have—a shovel, a hoe, a garden rake, and a garden hose—and then there are the extras that many pick up along the way—a roto-tiller, a garden tractor, etc. So it is with doing Bible study. There are tools that you must have, and there are additional tools that you may want to use as you become more proficient at the job.

### Basic tools

Of course the most basic tool is a good study Bible. Obviously, if anyone plans to study the Bible, he must have one to study! But there are certain characteristics for a good study Bible.

First, it should be a translation which is understandable to the reader and faithful to the original languages. For years the King James version has been the favorite; but many people have trouble studying the King James version, since some of its words and phrases are not contemporary English. Some modern translations that are understandable and faithful are: *The New American Standard Bible*; *The New International Version*; and *The Modern Language Bible* (new Berkeley version). Even if you prefer the King James Version, it would be helpful to use one of these other translations for comparison.

Second, it should have a cross-reference system. This is a list of references either in the margin or the center of the page, notes which point the reader to other places in the Bible relating to the passage being studied. Such a system is an indispensable aid for meaningful Bible study.

Third, a study Bible ought to have maps in the back. Frequently a passage can be illuminated by an understanding of the geography involved.

A second basic tool for your study is a notebook. Making notes on your reading helps in understanding and remembering what you read. Use the notebook for outlining chapters, paraphrasing verses, recording key ideas, commands, and promises, and making notes for application. As your notebook develops, you are compiling a personal commentary on the Bible.

A third basic tool is an English language dictionary. A basic problem in understanding the Bible is unfamiliar vocabulary. An English language dictionary enables you to look up unknown words. It is true that sometimes a word in the Bible will have a more doctrinal or precise definition than may be found in the dictionary, but the meaning of most unfamiliar words may be determined by using one.

These then are the basic tools: a study Bible; a notebook; and an English language dictionary.

### Advanced Equipment

In addition to the basics, there are some very helpful secondary tools for further study.

First, there is the Bible dictionary or handbook, a volume which tells about people, places, cultures, and doctrines found in the Bible along with a capsule analysis of each book. Two very helpful items in this category are *The New Bible Dictionary* and *Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible*.

Another helpful book is a commentary. How foolish many modern Christians are to imagine that a person should interpret the Bible in a historical vacuum. God has given to the church gifted men who throughout her history have contributed to the proper understanding of the Bible.

The best one-volume commentary is *Inter-Varsity's New Bible Commentary: Revised*. For the Bible student who wants something a little more thorough, there is the three-volume *Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Holy Bible* or the six-volume *Matthew Henry's Commentary*. Of course, commentaries on individual books of the Bible are also available.

A third advanced tool is a Bible concordance. A concordance enables you to study words and themes employed in the Bible. The two most complete concordances are *Young's Analytical Concordance*, and *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*.

A fourth tool is a basic book on theology. One of the most helpful is your *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms*. Every Presbyterian home ought to have a copy of this standard. Another helpful item is *Berkhof's Manual of Christian Doctrine*.

One other helpful secondary tool is a Bible atlas which is used to study the geography of the Bible lands. One of the best is the *MacMillan Bible Atlas*. A smaller but still helpful work is Hammond's *Atlas of the Bible Lands*.

Most of this equipment may be purchased at a local Christian bookstore, or from Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126.

### ***But How Do You Interpret It?***

Once the tools are selected what's your next step? In gardening there are certain basic principles or rules that you must observe. For example, you must know when to plant the seeds, how much space to give to each plant, and how much sunshine and what kind of soil each plant needs. In doing Bible study there are also certain basic rules or principles that you must keep in mind.

There are certain principles for interpreting prophecy, figures of speech, parables, etc. It is not my purpose to deal with these. If you are interested in further study, read T. Norton Sterrett's *How to Understand Your Bible* or R. C. Sproul's *Knowing Scripture*. For a more detailed study there is Louis Berkhof's volume *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*.

But there are some general principles of interpretation that each of us should keep in mind as we study.

The Bible uses language in a normal way. Of course there are special words in the Bible such as "redemption," "justification," "sanctification," etc., which have a more technical meaning. But we must remember that the Bible uses words and grammar much as any other book. The Bible was not written in some vague, mysterious language only the special few can understand. You should read the Bible in the same way you would any other book. If the sentence in the Bible has a question mark, then it is a question. If it has a condition, then it is like any other conditional sentence. Remember, don't make the Bible harder than it is!

Don't depend on your own ability alone to understand the message of the Bible. Believers have been promised the Holy Spirit to help us understand God's message. We should begin Bible study by

praying for the Holy Spirit's illumination.

One should always study a passage in light of its context (what has been written before and after the passage in question). No one who begins reading a book in the middle really understands what he reads, yet we frequently select a verse in the middle of a chapter without reading what has come before or gone after, and wonder why we can't understand the verse.

Another principle is the need to compare scripture with scripture. The Bible does not contradict itself. God didn't reveal one thing to Paul and just the opposite to Peter. So we need to weigh what is being said by comparing the

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***“. . . We must read the Bible looking for Christ and his relationship to his people. As our salvation is in Christ, so God's message to us is about Christ. In the Old as well as the New Testament one should determine to see Jesus Christ.”***

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passage being studied with other sections which bear upon it. For example, the Bible says that God is a Spirit; however, in other places it speaks of the eyes, hands, and feet of the Lord. Obviously, God cannot be a Spirit and also have bodily parts. By comparing scripture with scripture one understands that the Bible refers to God's having eyes, hands, and feet in order to demonstrate that God as a Spirit is able to do the same things that a person employs his eyes, hands, and feet to do. The use of cross-references is an effective way to compare scripture with scripture.

One additional principle to have in mind is that we must read the Bible looking for Christ and his relationship to his people. As our salvation is in Christ, so God's message to us is about Christ. In the Old as well as the New Testament one should determine to see Jesus Christ.

### ***How Do You Begin?***

These then are some basic principles which should guide each of us in our Bible study. But what now? How and where does one begin? In gardening, once you have the tools and a basic idea of what you are going to do, you must then know how to begin—select a plot of ground, decide what kind of seed and how much of each kind to plant, etc. That procedure is also important for Bible study. We must know where to begin. It is often at this point that good resolutions to study the Bible crumble in defeat and frustration.

To begin with, decide on the time and place for your study. Often we don't have time for Bible study because we don't make the time. A person makes time for what is most important to him. Failure in setting a time can lead to defeat. Either we forget about Bible study or we think of all the other things that must be done and never get around to studying the Bible. Each of us should work out a schedule that establishes a suitable time for Bible study and prayer. The same time each day, if possible, will aid you in setting a pattern.

All this may be said about selecting a place. It is very helpful to have a regular place set aside for Bible study, a place where your study tools are kept and in which you can have some degree of privacy. In the family we should work out the time and place with the other members of the family so that all may cooperate in respecting one another's time and place for Bible study. Granted, your circumstances and family relationships may not allow this. All right. Develop a creative alternative, something which for you will work just as well.

Then decide what kind of study you will pursue. A large variety of options and selections depends on your needs, inclinations, and interests.

Some will want to make a survey of the Bible, reading it through over a period of time. There are many different schedules available that will enable a person to read through the Bible within a year or two. It is wise to choose a schedule and stick to it. Banner of Truth publishes a yearly schedule. I have prepared a three-year schedule that may be ob-

*(continued on page 12)*

## A MEMORIAL TO ELDER REUBEN R. STUART

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15) was declared by the psalmist as he professed his love of God.

This promise was consummated by Elder Reuben R. Stuart as he entered the Church Triumphant on February 22, 1977 in his 93rd year of his earthly pilgrimage.

In the providence of our covenant God, Elder Stuart was the founding father of what is now Covenant Church in Wilksburg, Pennsylvania.

Having served as an elder in the Crafton Presbyterian Church, USA, and keenly aware of the doctrinal decline and apostasy in that denomination; and inasmuch as Elizabeth, the only child of Reuben and Margaret Mothersbaugh Stuart, had married The Rev. Robert L. Atwell, serving the Presbyterian Church, Harrisville, Pa., who meanwhile had led half of that congregation into the infant Faith Presbyterian Church of America; Elder Stuart was burdened of the Lord to seek establishment of a local faithful witness to the truth of God's Word and without compromise with the modernism of the day.

Elder Stuart's zeal, energy and leadership were evident from the very beginning of activity which brought together five persons in the first meeting

and some seventy persons in the first worship service, January 24, 1937, at which Rev. Robert L. Atwell conducted the service.

Mr. Stuart was elected elder unanimously at the organizational meeting February 2, 1937 and served actively until moving to Florida shortly after the death of Mrs. Stuart in 1961.

Mr. Stuart's constant reminder of the faithfulness of God in response to prayer was but one of his many contributions to the life of Covenant Church. He loved and was loved by all and although his advanced age and removal from Covenant Church life interrupted his regular attendance at all services, his example among us remains as to commitment, dedication and consecration. There remains the Lord's "well done thou good and faithful servant."

The session of Covenant Church notes his devotion to Christ and His Church and invites the Presbytery of Ohio, which he served well in earlier days when leadership and vigor were so greatly needed, to unite with us in this Memorial to this man of God, and request that copies of this citation be provided to his family.

"... we spend our years as a tale that is told ..." Psalm 90:9.

*Adopted by The Presbytery of Ohio of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on January 9, 1978 and directed it be spread on the minutes and a copy be sent to next of kin.*

"And I heard a voice from heaven, saying 'Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.'"

After a long life in Kingdom service, the Lord took to Himself Reuben Stuart, for many years a faithful Trustee of Westminster Theological Seminary. He now rests from his arduous labors and the good works performed for Christ and His Kingdom go along with him as a testimony to his faith and love of his Savior.

Mr. Stuart brought to the Board a firm commit-

ment to the truth for which the Seminary stands, the discernment of an experienced Christian businessman, and faithfulness in supporting this institution. He established the Margaret M. Stuart Memorial fund in memory of his beloved wife, an ardent supporter of Westminster Seminary.

The Board of Trustees renders thanks to God for the loyal support given by Mr. Stuart to Westminster Seminary and trusts that the family will be blessed in the memory of the devotion of this faithful servant of the Lord.

*Drawn up by the Board of Westminster Seminary*

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## He Is Also Able

(continued from page 4)

us to be most heart breaking were turned by God into the greatest blessings. During the time of our oldest daughter's pregnancy, God answered our prayers and brought her into His "Forever Family." She is indeed a "new creation in Christ Jesus," and is a constant reminder of God's faithfulness.

"That's one down, Lord, and three to go!"

Though we are still in the midst of very rough waters, yet the same God who changed Bryan's heart, my heart, and now our oldest daughter's heart is perfectly able to do the same in each of the others—and when He does, what glory will have been brought to Him! In the meantime, He molds us, shaping us and teaches us to trust Him, to look not at the circumstances, but at the God who is in control of every one of those circumstances! "Being fully assured that that which He has promised, He is also able to perform."

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## Family Worship

(continued from page 6)

prayer of every kind, whether secret or social.

Prayer in the family must be reverent (Matt. 6:9). Help your children understand that when they pray they are in the very presence of the living God. Encourage them to develop the practice of private Bible reading and prayer.

Prayer in the family should be brief and simple (Matt. 6:7). This is particularly true where there are young children. This is not the time for long, flowery, 'pulpit' prayers!

Prayer in the family should be adapted to the needs and capacities of the mem-

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## A Ministry in Memphis

Eastland Presbyterian Church (PCA) of Memphis, Tenn., desires to minister widely in the Mid-South area. Those moving to the area, or those temporarily in the area for medical or military reasons, are urged to contact the Rev. Robert L. Mabson (901-323-6578), or write to the church at 3741 Jackson Avenue, Memphis, TN 38108. Services are held each Sunday 11 a.m., 5:30 p.m., and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

bers of the family. Remember that God has invited us to pray about *everything* (Phil. 4:6). God wants to hear about financial needs, sore toes, a school party, the health of a pet, a family trip.

The head of the family is the natural leader of the family in prayer. He should prepare himself spiritually so that he can interpret the true needs of every member of his family to God.

REMEMBER: That all worship, if it is to be "worship in spirit and in truth", must be in the Name of Jesus Christ. Through your daily family devotions every member of your family should be challenged to receive Christ Jesus as Savior and to submit to Him as Lord of all life. From fellowship about God's Word and His Throne each member of the family should go out to share with others God's gracious gift of salvation.

"I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." Psalm 101:2

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## Scared of Books

(continued from page 5)

school to be especially effective in this area. On the contrary, the students attending Christian schools in my area averaged less reading time than those educated by the public school system. Therefore the blame returns to the family. I feel that it is the responsibility of the parents to enforce these principles. Though I did not question the adults, I tend to believe that most aren't reading enough to influence their children. Possibly, they don't know how to encourage their families in this area.

As a parent what can you do? How can you stress to your children the importance of growing by reading quality literature? Your first step might be to take more interest in your child. I have seen too many cases where parents are frustrated by the fact that teenagers seem to want independence, so they throw up their hands and walk away, leaving their teenagers without any answers. Soderholm emphasizes this point: "The young person must be allowed to make his own decisions with the guidance of the Lord. However, he should be aware of the possibilities. How can he make a wise choice if he knows only one side of the question?"<sup>4</sup> Show interest in your child. You might be curious to find out what he

does for eight hours a day (usual free time). Some parents don't know. Next, you could do some reading yourself. Find out what new Christian literature is coming and review some. That way you could decide what would be valuable for your son or daughter (the list below can help here). Set an example for your child, show him some things which you have read. The most important idea is to suggest some books that he could read for himself. I believe that you will find satisfaction in knowing that your child is being influenced and strengthened by famous Christian writers whose works can influence teenagers.

The following list of books were those most highly acclaimed by my friends. The asterisks indicate those which I feel to be the best and most edifying reading for teenagers. They are listed in alphabetical order by author.

- \*\**Watership Down* (Adams)
- Child of Satan—Child of God* (Atkins)
- Hiding Place* (Ten Boom)
- Tramp for the Lord* (Ten Boom)
- A New Song* (Boone)
- Prodigal Father* (Bottonly)
- Man in Black* (Cash)
- \*\**Born Again* (Colson)
- My Head Coach* (Crowell)
- Run Baby Run* (Cruz)
- \*\**Joni* (Earickson)
- Concerning Spiritual Gifts* (Hagin)
- What Faith Is* (Hagin)
- Prayer Secrets* (Hagin)
- \*\**All Creatures Great and Small* (Herriott)
- \*\**All Things Bright and Beautiful* (Herriott)
- \*\**Hinds Feet in High Places* (Hurnard)
- Hidden Man* (Kenyon)
- In His Presence* (Kenyon)
- The Father and the Family* (Kenyon)
- \*\**A Shepherd's View of the 23rd Psalm* (Keller)
- I Love the Word Impossible* (Kiemel)
- I'm Out to Change My World* (Kiemel)
- A Man Named Peter* (Marshall)
- Christy* (Marshall)
- To Live Again* (Marshall)
- The Singer* (Miller)
- Valley of Shadows* (Plett)
- Peace Child* (Richardson)
- \*\**He Gave Us a Valley* (Roseveare)
- \*\**Letters to Karen* (Shedd)
- \*\**Letters to Phillip* (Shedd)
- \*\**Discussion Manual for Relationships* (Webster)

<sup>4</sup> Mel White, *Ibid.*

## News and Views

(continued from page 2)

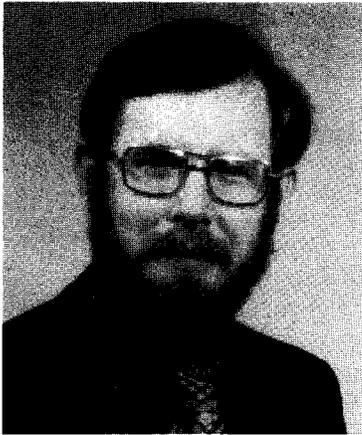
fall and winter semesters of the coming academic year and Professors Norman Shepherd and Harvie M. Conn for the entire year. A number of visiting lecturers were appointed for the 1978-79 year.

### New Appointments at Reformed Seminary

A pair of new faculty members have been appointed at Reformed Theological Seminary. Dr. Willem Arie VanGemerer and the Rev. L. Roy Taylor Jr. bring the school's full-time faculty to 20 members. The appointment of visiting professor McKendree Langley has also been extended through next year.

Dr. VanGemerer is an assistant professor of Old Testament at the seminary. He has held a similar post at Geneva College in Pennsylvania the last four years.

He earned his B.A. at the University



Van Gemerer



Taylor

of Illinois and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Wisconsin. VanGemerer holds the B.D. from Westminster Theological Seminary and has studied at the Moody Bible Institute and the Hebrew University. Born in Boskoop, Holland, VanGemerer is an ordained minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Taylor has been pastor of a church in Gadsden, Ala. for several years. In Jackson he is an assistant professor of homiletics.

The Rev. Mr. Taylor is a native of Birmingham and attended Southeastern Bible College there. He has studied at New Orleans Baptist Seminary and earned an M.Div. from Grace Theological Seminary in Wisconsin. Currently Taylor is seeking a D.Min., concentrating on church growth, at Fuller Seminary in California.

Langley, who came to the seminary last fall from a teaching post at Gordon College, is a visiting professor of history. Previously he taught at Barrington College and the Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

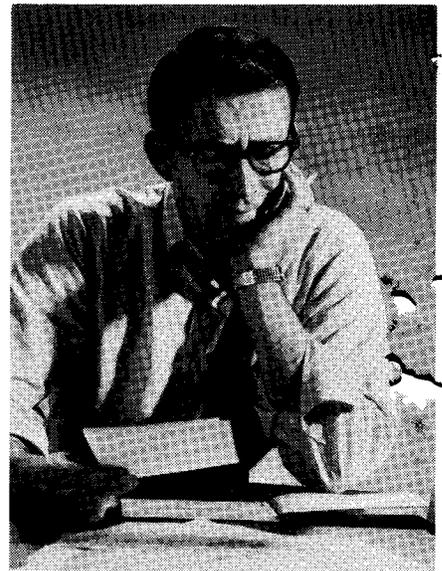
A Ph.D. candidate at the Free University, Langley is from New Jersey. He graduated with B.A. and M.A. degrees from Gordon College, then earned his M.Div. at Westminster Theological Seminary. Langley also holds the M.A. in history from Northeastern University in Boston.

Mr. and Mrs. Langley have a son and a daughter.

### Visit of Dr. Packer

Dr. J. I. Packer, the well-known Anglican theologian, was the guest speaker at the eighteenth annual Reformed Laymen's Fellowship Retreat at Pinebrook Conference Grounds, Stroudsburg, Pa., May 12-13. He gave three addresses on the work of the Holy Spirit: in Evangelical Theology, in Evangelical life and in Evangelical Revival. Dr. Packer was most insistent on the need to pray for a revival of the Spirit's work in our day. He developed a theology of revival from the Scriptures in contradistinction to the superficial revivalism of our day. Some 240 men attended the Retreat, representing most of the Reformed denominations in the country.

Dr. Packer was also one of the speakers at the annual Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology of which the theme, this year, was "The Cross Our Glory." He has been teaching a course in Puritan Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.



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## Tips on Cultivation

(continued from page 8)

tained upon request. In survey reading, the purpose is not only to read a given amount of material, but also to learn something about the Bible's message. As you read, use your notebook to write down your thoughts on each chapter. There are three appropriate questions to ask about every passage studied: What did it mean to those for whom it was written? What does it mean now? and What is the application? Remember in the Old Testament to note what is being said about Christ and the church.

Those who have a general view of the flow of the Bible may wish to study a particular book. After choosing a book (begin with a gospel or an epistle), study a short passage each day. With this technique you will have more time to analyze the passage, using cross-references and other helps. Make thorough notes.

Still another approach is the thematic study in which a person studies certain Biblical themes. Say, for example, you want to study the theme of redemption. Using a concordance, you would begin by studying all the passages in the Old and New Testaments that refer to redemption. But then you must remember that there are many other terms like redemption, atonement, and sacrifice that you will also want to check. Note the passages in which a particular term is not used but which deals with the theme. By keeping a notebook of the different doctrines you discover in the Bible, you'll have a growing doctrinal reference system. Cross-references are also useful in tracing themes through the Bible.

No matter what direction your study takes, if you are not now engaged in Bible study, today is the time to start. Make sure you have the tools on hand, get the principles in mind, plan the time and place for your study, choose your course of study, and begin. Now is the time to cultivate a garden that will bring forth abundant fruit for the Lord.

The Police Department of Houston, Texas gives . . .

## Twelve Rules for Raising Delinquent Children

1. Begin with infancy to give the child everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe the world owes him a living.
2. When he picks up bad words, laugh at him. This will make him think he's cute. It will also encourage him to pick up "cuter" phrases that will blow off the top of your head later.
3. Never give him any spiritual training. Wait until he is twenty-one and then let him "decide for himself."
4. Avoid use of the word "wrong". It may develop a guilt complex. This will condition him to believe later, when he is arrested for stealing a car, that society is against him and he is being persecuted.
5. Pick up everything he leaves lying around—books, shoes, and clothes. Do everything for him so that he will be experienced in throwing all responsibility on others.
6. Let him read any printed matter he can get his hands on. Be careful that the silver-ware and drinking glasses are sterilized, but let his mind feast on garbage.
7. Quarrel frequently in the presence of your children. In this way they will not be too shocked when the home is broken up later.
8. Give a child all the spending money he wants. Never let him earn his own. Why should he have things as tough as you had them?
9. Satisfy his every craving for food, drink, and comfort. See that every sensual desire is gratified. Denial may lead to harmful frustration.
10. Take his part against neighbors, teachers, policemen. They are all prejudiced against your child.
11. When he gets into real trouble, apologize for yourself by saying, "I never could do anything for him."
12. Prepare for a life of grief. You will be likely to have it.

## Teachers Wanted

Philadelphia, Pa. — Teachers and teaching-principal needed for grades K-6 in Spruce Hill Christian School—a new Christian school opening this fall in West Philadelphia! Strong Christian community. Contact: Mar-

sha Petty, 4207 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

San Jose, Cal. — Teachers needed for kindergarten; grade 1; grade 2; grades 4-5; grades 5-6; and music, vocal and instrumental. Contact: Donald G. Jamieson, 2350 Leigh Ave., San Jose, Cal. 95124 (408-377-8713).