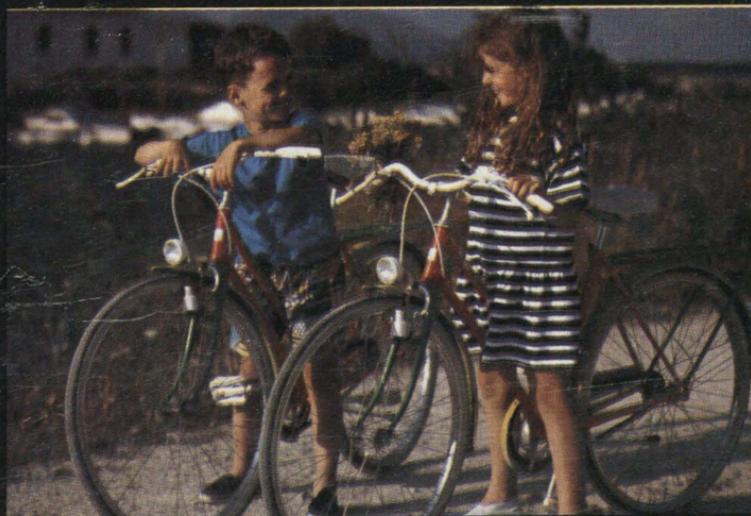


# CHILDREN



**AMERICA'S GREATEST  
NATURAL RESOURCE**

by  
**D.P. DIFFINE, Ph.D.**

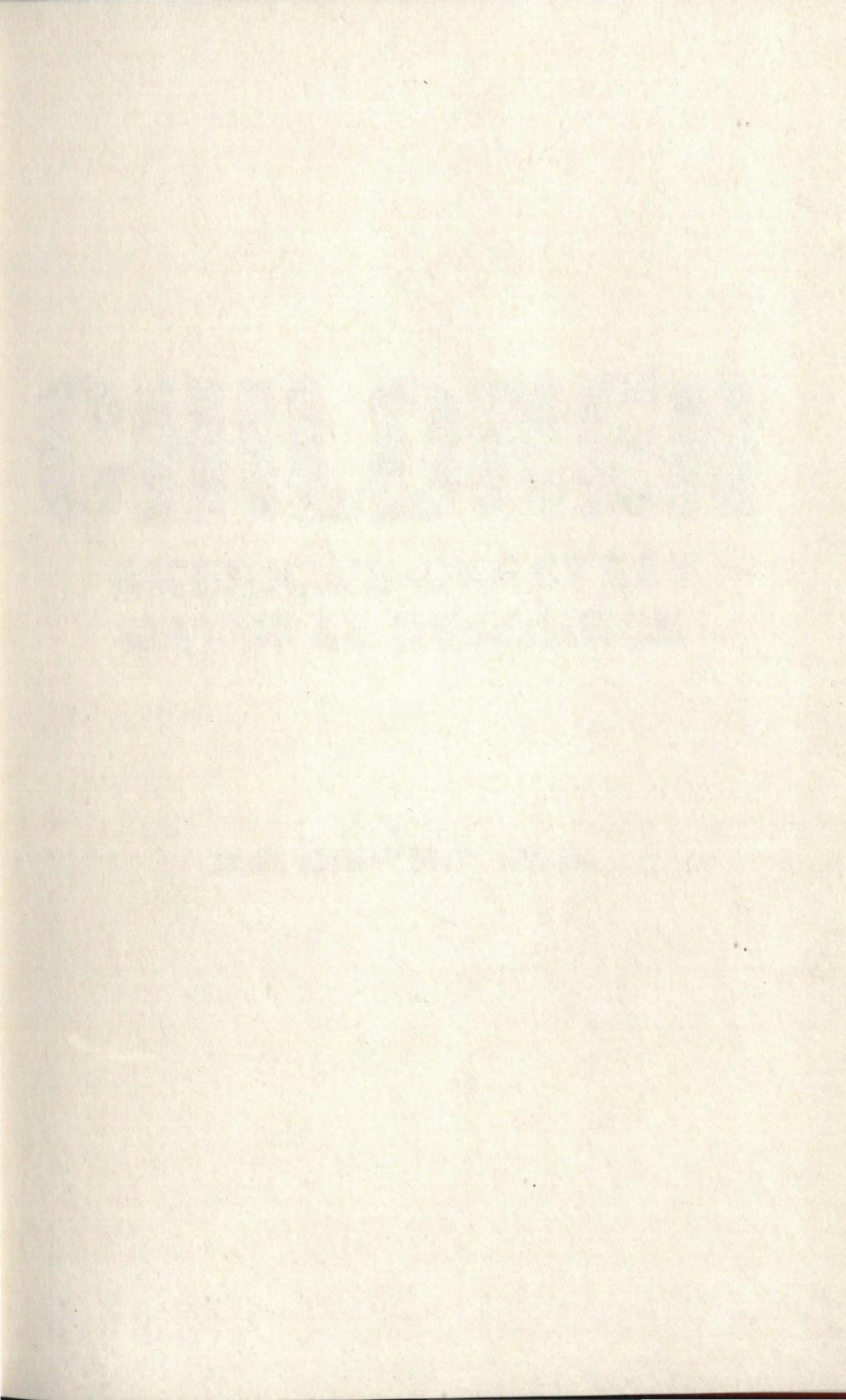
## **Beautiful Choice or Unglamorous Option?**

Family. It is the closest thing to immortality this side of the grave. Family is the past, the present and the future. Family is for growing up in, for going away from, for coming home to. Family is America's most productive and efficient department of health and human services. We are all a part of God's family, the best of His creation. Real families bend but don't break in responding to life's challenges.

This book honors, among others, young women with crisis pregnancies who, though unmarried, boldly and wisely developed adoption plans in the name of Godly charity and true religion. With strength of character, they carried their babies and preserved their own health and self-worth. Then, by ushering the new babies safely into the world at full term, the birthmothers selflessly gave their babies something that adoptive parents could not: birthdays.

Thereby concluding that chapter of their lives with compassion and love, the birthmothers released their babies to fill the aching voids in the hearts of childless couples. In a sense, the babies were given life twice. We need to express a very positive attitude toward adoption and appreciate both the sorrow and joy that adoption brings to those involved.

It is not just enough to be right in these matters. Above all, the developing pre-born child is part of the human family and deserves our welcome into and guidance through life's noble journey. As the earth rotates, the lives of natural and adoptive families are often inexorably linked. This, in part, is also their story. God often moves in mysterious ways to complete the family circle.





# **CHILDREN**

**AMERICA'S GREATEST  
NATURAL RESOURCE**

by

**D.P. DIFFINE, Ph.D.**

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Private Enterprise Education  
HARDING UNIVERSITY

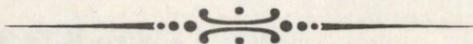
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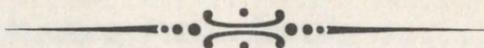
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*To David and Danielle,  
World Class kids  
who will always be in  
my Hall of Fame.*





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## Introduction

### INTRODUCTION: A Beautiful Choice or an Unglamorous Option?

*"I was born to a woman I never knew, and raised by another who took in orphans. I do not know my background, my lineage, my biological or cultural heritage. But when I meet someone new, I treat them with respect. For after all, they could be my people."*

-- James Michener

Family. It is the closest thing to immortality this side of the grave. Family is the past, the present and the future. Family is for growing up in, for going away from, for coming home to. Family is America's most productive and efficient department of health and human services. Real families bend but don't break in responding to life's challenges.

We are all a part of God's family, the best of His creation. As the earth rotates, the lives of natural and adoptive families are often inexorably linked. This, in part, is also their story regarding real life and death matters. God often moves in mysterious ways to complete the family circle.

So, it is with deep and fond appreciation that this book honors, among others, young women with crisis pregnancies who, though unmarried, boldly and wisely developed adoption plans in the name of Godly charity and true religion. With strength of character, they carried their babies and also preserved their own health and self-worth. Then, by ushering the new babies

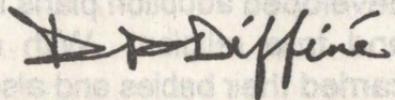
## Introduction

safely into the world at full term, the birthmothers selflessly gave their babies something that adoptive parents could not: birthdays.

Thereby concluding that chapter of their lives with compassion and love, the birthmothers released their babies to fill the aching voids in the hearts of childless couples. In a sense, the babies were given life twice. I would hope that we could all express a very positive attitude toward adoption and manifest a fuller understanding of both the sorrow and joy that adoption brings to those involved.

It is not just enough to be right in these matters. If we deeply care about life, let us change our hearts, open our hands and extend help by being actively involved. Above all, the developing pre-born child is part of the human family and deserves our welcome into and guidance through life's noble journey.

Consequently, and because of the fresh start that was granted to all participants in this great and tender human drama, we thank God each day for every remembrance of these birthmothers and their unselfish maternal love. Such is the Kingdom of Heaven: "Take heed that ye despise not one of those little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 18:10).

D. Diffine

# 1. LIFE AND DEATH MATTERS BEFORE US

Today we celebrate life and the Giver of life who makes it not only possible but also worthwhile.\* Author and novelist James Michener is indeed a member of a prestigious and talented club of famous adoptees. The adoptees' names, and in many cases the events of their lives (warts and all), are known to us. Each, as a fallible, mortal human being, was born with a free will to do good and/or evil:

1996 Olympic Decathlon Gold Medal Winner Dan O'Brien ... founder of Wendy's International Dave Thomas ... former President Gerald Ford ... founder of Apple Computers Steve Jobs ... pioneer bird watcher John J. Audubon ... actor Richard Burton ... Olympic figure skaters Peter and Kitty Carruthers ... newscaster Faith Daniels ... actor Ted Danson ... professional football player Eric Dickerson ... actor Hugh O'Conner ... Olympic ice skater Scott Hamilton ... Olympic diver Greg Louganis ... professional baseball player Jim Palmer ... former First Lady Nancy Reagan ... former President Reagan's son Michael Reagan ... playwright Edward Albee ... serial killer David Berkowitz ... senator Robert Byrd ... Christina

---

\*The text of this book also includes excerpts from a keynote speech of the same title by D.P. Diffine presented on November 4, 1993, at the 30th Annual Celebration Dinner sponsored by Christian Homes of Abilene, coinciding with the placement of their 1,000th baby for adoption.

## Life and Death Matters Before Us

Crawford, daughter of Joan Crawford ...  
Admiral Farragut ... rock singer Deborah  
Harry ... television program host and author  
Art Linkletter ... actor James McArthur ... the  
patriarch Moses ... Karen Ann Quinlan ... first  
recorded adoptee King Sargon of  
Mesopotamia ... explorer Henry Morton  
Stanley ... Congressman Jim Lightfoot ...  
actress Melissa Gilbert ... orchestra leader  
Les Brown ... author Edgar Allan Poe

One has to wonder in amazement at the terrible loss to our human family of another 30 million babies who, since 1973, were denied their human potential to make the above mentioned list. What could they have become: Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief? We will never, never know.

*What could they have become:  
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief? We  
will never, never know.*

Therefore, this book deals over and over again with two profound questions: First, "what can we do, in the name of Godly charity and true religion, to keep on providing help, assistance, support, love, care and nurturing for birthmothers? And second, "what can we also do to keep finding ways, in these complex legal times, that such children can continue to fill the aching voids in the hearts of other childless couples?"

## Life and Death Matters Before Us

In life there certainly are profoundly sad events which prohibit a parent from fulfilling a God-given duty so deeply cherished. This letter to his unborn child, published originally in the *Christian Herald*, was found on the body of a soldier (no further details are known):

My child, sleeping now in the dark and gathering strength for the struggle of birth, I wish you well. At present you have no proper shape. In time and through the life of your mother, whom I deeply love, there will be something in you that will give you power to fight for air and life. Such is your heritage, such is your destiny as a child born of woman -- to fight for light and hold on without knowing why.

May you seek always and strive in good faith and high courage in this world where men grow so tired. Keep your wonder at great and noble things like sunlight and thunder, the rain and the stars, the wind and the sea, the growth of trees and the return of harvests. Keep your heart hungry for new knowledge; keep your hatred of a lie; and keep your power of indignation.

Now I must die, and you must be born to stand upon the rubbish heap of my errors. Forgive me for this. I am ashamed to leave you an untidy world. In thought, as a last benediction, I kiss your forehead. Good night to you -- and good morning and a clear dawn.

## Life and Death Matters Before Us

The letter is so deeply resolute: a parent courageously laying down his life for a real, and yet unborn, child. In this book we deal with quite the opposite: the issue of parents needing to live for, and/or with, their yet unborn children.

I have always believed that special kids and special parents were meant to get together. This is an astounding list of "Who's Who" of adoptive parents, not to mention millions of others who, although not famous, have lovingly assumed that surrogate role with dignity and stewardship:

actress Nell Carter ... actor Ted Danson ...  
actress Jamie Lee Curtis ... actors Tom  
Cruise and Nicole Kidman ... actress Michele  
Pfeiffer ... singer Pearl Bailey ... actor Paul  
Newman ... actors Roy Rogers and Dale  
Evans ... columnist Estelle Parsons ...  
humorist Art Buchwald ... baseball player  
Willie Mays ... actress Gloria Swanson ...  
Hedy Lamarr ... actor Bob and Dorothy Hope  
... Joan Fontaine ... actress Bette Davis ...  
actress Helen Hayes ... actress Eve Arden ...  
actor Henry Fonda ... actor George Burns ...  
actors Burt Reynolds and Loni Anderson ...  
Senator Lloyd Bentson ... Congressman  
James Oberstar ... Senator Paul Simon ...  
Senator Larry Craig ... clothing designer  
Oscar de la Renta ... actor Sammy Davis, Jr.  
... entrepreneur John DeLorean ... actress  
Mia Farrow ... singer John Denver ... actor Ed  
McMahon ... actor Carrol O'Conner ... actress

## Life and Death Matters Before Us

Valerie Harper ... actress Julie Andrews ...  
Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland ... baseball  
player Tim Burke ... talk show hostess Sally  
Jesse Raphael ... newscaster Barbara  
Walters ... actor Jerry Lewis ...  
Congresswoman Marjorie Margolies-  
Mezvinsky ... Congresswoman Deborah  
Pryce ... Congressman Ron Klink ...  
Congressman Thomas Bliley ... Senator  
Gordon Humphrey ... Senator Jesse Helms  
... and last but certainly not least, adoptive  
father Joseph, the husband of Mary.

Again, there are some on the list about whom we  
know all too well when it comes to their triumphs and  
tragedies. They are in many ways a slice of  
"Everyman" like each of us.



## 2. AMERICA'S DEADLY NEW CIVIL WAR

Sometimes we unwittingly trivialize great social issues. Once, when our kids were teenagers, I facetiously told an audience that I was puzzled as to why we had the great debate about when life begins -- at conception or at birth. To a parent of any teenager, I said, "It's obvious that life begins when the kids leave home!" Mom and I have been so busy raising our children, that we really haven't had a chance until now to step back and examine the process.

From the time that our son (presently a husband, daddy, and a fourth year medical student), and our daughter (now a professional accountant) were placed in our hands at about two to three weeks of age, it has felt as if the calender has had a fast forward on it. They started out as Dr. Dobson describes all infants "... a noise at one end and a mess at the other." And now here we are relishing the wonderful world of bonus babies in the form of grandchildren.

I will attempt to start with impartiality, which will at times yield to passion, as we take on this life and death matter as it has evolved over the years to become what Mother Teresa recently called the abortion controversy -- "the great issue of our time." Really, is it possible to be both pro-choice before conception and pro-life after conception? I think so.

Most of my thinking came together in the fall of 1993 as I prepared remarks as a keynote speaker for the 30th Annual Celebration Dinner for Christian Homes of Abilene. That same fall of 1993, and while a

## America's Deadly New Civil War

guest at Parents' Weekend early in my son's freshman year in medical school (University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences), we found ourselves touring an anatomy lab with other proud moms and dads.

A lady behind us, as she pointed to a 26 week old "fetus" that was preserved on display in a gallon-size glass bottle, made the following comment to another lady next to her: "That's the age my baby was." The second lady responded, "Oh, you had a miscarriage at 26 weeks?" "No," the first lady replied, "I'm describing my son -- the one who's now a freshman here in medical school, who was born very prematurely at 26 weeks." The "fetus" in the bottle was hardly the size of a full grown hamster. The story hardly needs any more commentary.

*"Fetus" is Latin for "baby."*

I was flabbergasted more recently to read that "fetus" is Latin for "baby." Do the law and the courts have any right to set priorities so that the convenience of the mother takes precedence over the life of the baby? Certainly not, says Supreme Court Justice White.

Personally, I have never understood how some good intentioned folks could conduct a candlelight vigil for convicted murderers on death row and at the same time be pro-abortion which is nothing more than

## America's Deadly New Civil War

administering, yes, capital punishment to an innocent unborn baby.

Free will is everybody's option. Nevertheless, actions do have consequences. We can be both pro-choice before creating life and pro-life thereafter. Before conception there is a choice. After conception there is a baby. The quick and deadly option of abortion is wrong. Let the baby decide.

Much ink has been spilled over the years, and certainly much blood shed, over these issues. This book is just another addition to the long list of publications on these issues.

Hopefully, the material herein will motivate people to further study and also work toward a greater understanding of God's will on these issues. One may not agree with every word printed in this book nor should one feel he needs to do so. It is hoped that the reader will think about the points laid out in the book, and then decide for himself.

In the meantime, let's all be known as a true friend of the family and pass the word:

One man awake,  
Awakens another  
The Second awakens  
His next-door brother.  
The three awake  
Can rouse a town

## America's Deadly New Civil War

By turning the whole place  
Upside down.  
The many awake  
Can make such a fuss  
It finally awakens the rest of us.  
One man up with dawn in his eyes.  
Multiplies.

### 3. LET'S CELEBRATE LIFE EVERY DAY

*The following is a continued partial text of my keynote address at Christian Homes in 1993.*

Yes, there is a great debate in the land. Some years ago, I spoke to a "pro-life" women's group on one occasion. To get their attention right at the beginning, I told them I was "pro-choice." They were at least mildly upset until I proclaimed, "I'm for letting the baby decide!"

Alas, children enter our home and make so much racket for 20 years we can hardly stand it. Then they depart leaving the house so silent we think we will go mad. And so, we celebrate life and look at our own son and daughter. They have completed the First Quarter of the Human Race. And at this point, they are ahead! But it's an awfully long journey through Eternity. We want them to make it as sure as they can.

*We will live some day forevermore,  
because our Father in Heaven is  
Eternal.*

We want them to remember this -- there is a God, and man is His child. We will all die some day, because our earthly mother and father were human. I helped preach two funerals in the past three months. We will live some day forevermore, because our Father in Heaven is Eternal. That's the "good news" we want to pass on to them.

## Let's Celebrate Life Every Day

Our son, a Biochemistry graduate from Harding University, is about to graduate from medical school and begin a residency in family practice. Here's what he wrote, in part, on his medical school application:

My goal is to help people gain mobility, battle against needless suffering, and avoid premature death. My life's mission is to pay back, through a life of medical service and research, that gift that was given to me those many years ago.

Our daughter is a professional accountant. I'll never forget that note she wrote me as a little girl: "I love you Dad, and I know you love God and Jesus." Isn't that the way it's suppose to be? First, in life, our children learn to love their parents. Then they learn to love their parents' Bible. Finally, they learn to love their parents' Savior.

This was written by our daughter as she reached the midpoint of her teen years:

### Father and Friend

It seems like you've always been there for me,  
Not as authority but as my friend.  
Something inside you only I can see,  
Like a noise in a whispering wind.  
My time spent with you has been worthwhile,  
Especially the day of the baseball game.  
You knew how to bring my face to smile,  
It makes me feel like a queen in her reign.

## Let's Celebrate Life Every Day

Overcoming the trials that we once had,  
Inside of my heart I would always know,  
A bond shared by a daughter and her dad,  
So special that it would forever grow.

So to my father and my special friend,  
All my blessings and love to you I send.

Without organizations such as Christian Homes of Abilene, and in Arkansas, Childrens' Homes of Paragould, where would our "special" son and daughter be? Would they have had a life, a name, or even a proper burial? Probably not. The womb, which should be the safest place in the world, could have become their tomb. It has for 30 million others in two decades.

*The womb, which should be the safest place in the world, could have become their tomb.*

Some people may feel that your efforts here at Christian Homes don't add up. But, without a doubt, you have successfully subtracted more than 1,000 potential casualties from the total, for sure. And now down the road there is a bonus we never even thought about in 1970. Grandchildren!

Christian Homes President Nancy Miller used to remind us to not make our children feel too "special." She told us the story about the child on the playground

## Let's Celebrate Life Every Day

asking others, "Are you adopted?" "No." -- "Oh, too bad." When ours did excel, especially athletically, people would ask, "Did they get that from you?" "No," I'd say, "it just runs in the family" -- or "No, that's why we adopted."

Of course, the first question people always ask is "Do they know they're adopted?" Sure! They'll never remember a time when they didn't know. That's the key. You've got to be truthful. We told them, early and often, that we found them in a big, family-size box of "Cheer." I mean, why lie to them. Never underestimate the value of delivering a message of truth on the wings of humor. Ah, kinship.

High school was an exciting time for us. Our daughter learned the "goods" and "bads" of being Treasurer for a couple of organizations. Our son, a superb quarter miler, helped set a school record in the mile relay at the state track meet and was a true gladiator as a defensive end in football.

Now, you ask, were there ever times, however brief, that we felt like "wringing their necks?" Sure. Did we ever return from a car trip and feel the urge to "dropkick-them-through-the-hedge?" You bet. Were there ever times when their ingratitude or procrastination just about sent us "around the bend?" Oh, yeah. Did we struggle to gain even primitive two-way communication? Uh-huh. Have we ever wished they wouldn't tell people their last name? Yep. Are we on a "first-name basis" with several auto-body shops in town? Sure.

## Let's Celebrate Life Every Day

Nevertheless, I would like to share with you a partial text of the traditional senior letter that parents present to their Harding Academy graduates just prior to their Commencement exercises. Here is the opening paragraph of the letter I wrote my son just before high school graduation and then the closing paragraph of a similar senior letter to my daughter (the pages in between contained a chronicle of interesting events in their lives to date):

Here, on the eve of your Graduation is your senior letter which we have been writing (and rewriting) in our minds for nearly two decades. You are, as you know, our special son. From the beginning, you were so "special" in the way that you came to us, and "special" in the procedure of your selection into our home. You are "special" because, as our adopted son, you seem to have that "extra-special" touch of God's beauty treatment in your physical appearance. We have always believed that God made "special" children and "special couples" to get together the way we have in our stay-together-forever, two parent, Christian family.

### AND THEN ...

This senior letter concludes, dear daughter, the same way it began. Please know that you have always been so much fun to be around. We do so look up to you, young lady. We are so proud of your tender conscience. You are always teaching us something wonderful. You

## Let's Celebrate Life Every Day

never cease to amaze us. You are the best -- truly World Class. You'll always be in our "Hall of Fame." You make us so happy and proud -- so much so, that we just have one final request -- can we have your autograph?

#### 4. PART OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

*This chapter continues the text of my 1993 keynote address at Christian Homes of Abilene.*

Ladies and gentlemen, how did we arrive at this point? Dumb luck? Providence? Only our Heavenly Father knows. Who else could have known that things were set in motion when a young sailor was stationed in Honolulu in the early 1950's. There, while working part-time as a used car salesman, he attended church with a family whose little girl would attend Abilene Christian a decade later.

That young lady often babysat his children while in college at ACU. And she admired him so much, she even let him try to talk her out of marrying a no-account West Coast guy who was at that time a marginal student, going nowhere and without hope. Nevertheless, love conquers all.

A half dozen years later, and while living in San Antonio in the Air Force where I was the Commander of the 3707th Basic Training Squadron, we were pleased to take the advice of this gentleman and begin a great adventure with Christian Homes. I'm glad that the home study found us to be "normal (Ok, you gave us the benefit of the doubt)." So, we extend a "thank you" to that former sailor (our kids grew up calling him "Uncle Dusty") our dear friend, Dusty Rhodes -- his delightful wife, Nancy -- and to our Father in Heaven who made life not only possible, but also worthwhile.

And, no doubt you have heard the expression, "God couldn't be everywhere, so he made Mothers." I'd

## Part of the Human Family

like to suggest a footnote to that: "Mothers couldn't be everywhere, so God made Christian Homes." And truly, when the history is written of those pioneers who stood in the breach (no pun intended), the name of Nancy Miller will most certainly be in the headlines. Amen?

Christian Homes was built by extraordinary efforts of a growing minority. The efforts of these people have been, in three words: "Tre--Men--Dous!" The constituency of Christian Homes will be forever in their debt. You might be mindful sometimes -- in the office, in the store, at the bank, or at a seminar -- of the debt you can't repay to yesterday, but can render only to tomorrow. Of course, you are under no obligation to what the past has been.

*Mothers couldn't be everywhere, so  
God made Christian Homes.*

Forget not that the men and women who shaped yesterday also shaped today; but remember that you can shape tomorrow. Most people can easily ignore any debt they might owe to the past. Some men and women, however, feel a profound obligation to yesterday and tomorrow. Maybe you are one of them!

America is the oldest living Republic. Our Constitution doesn't guarantee a good life, prosperous life, happy life, or a long life -- just the protection of life. We make of our lives what we will! As I have told my

## Part of the Human Family

students and my children, "There are talents given to us and us alone. We must use them and reinvent ourselves every day."

Where is the redemptive value of a lifetime of work? How do you spell relief? F-A-M-I-L-Y. Family makes it all come alive. You be the best dad, husband, brother, son -- mom, wife, sister, daughter you can be. Give them good memories. And how will we and our young people beat the odds when it comes to marriage and family (they have one chance in two of making it)?

For starters, try for long courtships. Go through the seasons with that person. Do your homework on him. Is he mean, lazy, dishonest? He might have some weird mood swings when there is a full moon and the hormones are at high tide. Study him.

Then, after you pair off with the benefit of clergy, daily reaffirm your personal values, firmly grasp what is important in life. Daily choose a mutually enriching environment for your mate, your children, and yourself. Daily consider your family worth preserving and enjoying. You'll have the power to say "Yes" to your family and "No" to anyone or anything else.

Then, the person who marries our kids will be so fortunate indeed. So, will our grandchildren. And perhaps their great-grandparents too -- four living generations blessed. Create a strong, loyal family, bound together and deeply rooted in faith and trust. Work with purpose. Take what they've accomplished and build on it. You don't conquer real families.

## Part of the Human Family

In conclusion -- normally, that's like a wake up call -- I dreamed once I was in a faculty meeting. Woke up, and sure enough, I was! Seriously, a century and a half ago, a young attorney, Daniel Webster, in summing up the court case of Dartmouth College vs. The State Board of Education (which was trying to take over that private college) -- Webster said this to the Judge: "It's a small school, sir -- But there are those who love her."

Regarding your role as a member of this extended family called Christian Homes of Abilene -- if you should ever question your role, remember this: There is no greater gift than to have God's little ones entrusted to you. God must love them very much, because somehow He gave them you. If He rewards you, far beyond your worth, by letting you, in some way, be their benefactor, then who are you to question His wisdom?

*It has been a great ride. I'm glad we bought a ticket. Aren't you?*

And so, as we "Celebrate Life," I ask you these two final questions. First, "what will you do, in the name of Godly Charity and True Religion, to keep on providing help, assistance, support, love, care and nurturing for birthmothers? And second, "what will you also do to keep finding ways, in these complex legal times, that such children can continue to fill the aching voids in the hearts of other childless couples?"

## Part of the Human Family

Yes, Christian Homes of Abilene is, by some measures, a small organization, but "there are those who love her," for sure. So, we salute you and commend you to your task. Thank you for making it possible, long ago, for us to "Celebrate Life" today.

Our house is mostly empty again. On one wall hangs a framed copy of "Ode To An Adopted Child." And one of our guest bedrooms, which used to be our son's bedroom, is being retrofitted into a nursery. So, especially tonight we say, "Thanks -- thanks for the memories." It has been a great ride. I'm glad we bought a ticket. Aren't you?



## 5. THE UNBORN CHILD IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

Each of the following scriptures is freestanding. Together, each tile of the broad mosaic sends a compelling message that hardly needs commentary:

*"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis. 1:27)."*

*"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live ... (Deuteronomy. 30:19)."*

*"You shall not commit murder (Ex. 20:13)."*

*"And for your life blood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it. (Genesis 9:5-7)."*

*"Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb, I*

## **The Unborn Child in the Light of Scripture**

*knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations' (Jeremiah 1:4-5)."*

*"All souls are mine (Ezekiel 18:4)."*

*"Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price ... (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)."*

*"And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah (Genesis 4:1)."*

*"Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward (Psalm 127:3)."*

*"For thou didst form my inward parts: Thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth. Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows right well! My substance was not hidden from You when I was made in secret and intricately wrought ... Your eyes did see my substance, yet being unformed; and in Your book all my members were*

## **The Unborn Child in the Light of Scripture**

*written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psalm 139:13-16)."*

*"Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb? (Job 31:15)."*

*"If men strive and hurt a woman with child (one who is pregnant) so that her fruit (child) depart from her ... and if any harm follow, then you shall give life for life (Exodus 21:21-24)."*

*"Thus says The Lord, your Redeemer, and He Who formed you from the womb: I am The Lord Who makes all things (Isaiah 44:24)."*

*"Have You not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have clothed me with skin and flesh, and have fenced me with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and favor, and Your visitation has preserved my spirit (Job 10:10-12)."*

*"And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a man child conceived (Job 3:3)."*

*"For three sins of Ammon, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath, because he ripped*

## The Unborn Child in the Light of Scripture

*open the pregnant women of Gilead in order to extend his borders. (Amos 1:3)."*

*"There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, ... (Proverbs 6:16-17)."*

*"Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture (Psalm 100:3)."*

*"He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (Colossians 1:17)."*

*"Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb. I am the Lord that maketh all things ... (Isaiah 44:24)."*

*"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41)."*

*"For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salvation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy (Luke 1:44)."*

*"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 18:10)."*

## 6. LIFE AND DEATH BEFORE BIRTH -- A JOURNAL ACCOUNT

*I have personalized this stark journal account to dramatize the humanity involved:*

Week 1 -- This is the first day of the rest of my life. My parents do not know it yet as I am as tiny as a grain of sand, but it is I, for sure. And I am to be a boy. I shall have brown hair and brown eyes. Much has already been determined, even the fact that I shall love to run and play. My human life has begun. It's an amazing thing. Even before implantation, the gender of my new life can be determined. And at implantation, my new life already consists of hundreds of cells. Additionally, I have developed a protective hormone to prevent my mother's body from rejecting me as foreign tissue.

Week 2 -- There are those who say I am not yet a real person and that only my mother lives. However, I am real, just as a small slice of bread is not truly the whole loaf. My mother is, and I am, too. My new life has developed its own blood cells. The placenta is part of my new life and not of my mother. Toward the end of this week I will experience occasional pulsations of a muscle that will become my heart.

Week 3 -- My mouth has been formed, and I can open it. In less than a year, I shall be laughing and two years from now talking. I would be ungrateful if my first word I said wasn't "Mama." My eyes are starting to develop, too. The foundation of my entire nervous system has been laid out. What a week this third week has been! My heart began beating all by itself. From

## **Life and Death Before Birth -- A Journal Account**

now on it shall gently beat for the rest of my life without ever stopping to rest. After many years it will tire. It will then stop, and I shall probably die of old age as all mortals do because their earthly parents were human. But praise God I can live forever because my father in Heaven is eternal!

Week 4 -- I am growing rapidly every day. I am still very small, only 1/10 of an inch long and yet already my eyes, spinal cord nervous system, lungs, stomach, and intestines are taking shape. My arms and legs are becoming more defined. But I'll have to wait a long time yet before those little legs will raise me to my mother's lap, before these little arms will be able to swing a baseball bat and embrace my father. My tiny little heart, which began beating on the 18th day, now pumps all the more confidently. All this has happened before my mother was aware of my new life within her.

Week 5 -- My heart continues to beat regularly. Forty pairs of muscles are developing along the trunk of my new life. There is regular blood flow within my vascular system and my ears and nasal development have begun.

Week 6 -- My skeletal movements began this week. It will still be twelve more weeks before my mother may notice any stirrings. My heart energy output is reported to be almost twenty percent of an adult. My skeleton is complete and the reflexes are present. Electrical brain wave patterns can be recorded as ample evidence that "thinking" at some level is taking place in my new life. This is what separates me from the animals. I am a

## Life and Death Before Birth -- A Journal Account

thinking person. My hands are forming tiny fingers. They are quite small, but soon I will be able to grasp a baseball and bat.

Week 7 -- Today the doctor informed my mom that I am living here just under her heart. She must be very pleased. I now look just like a tiny doll, with fingers, toes, and ears, too. If my lip is tickled I will pull away. Does all this please you, Mom?

Week 8 -- My parents are probably deciding on a name for me. However, they don't at this time know that I am a little boy. There are so many great names to choose from. I will probably need a middle name, too, for I am getting bigger everyday. All my body systems are present now and an electrocardiogram reading can be taken next week. I can make a tiny fist, get hiccups, suck my thumb, wake and sleep. All my organs are functioning -- stomach, liver, kidneys, brain -- all are intact. There are lines in my palms. All future development of my life will simply be refinement of and an increase in size until maturity at approximately 23 years. All I need is nourishment. I can swim freely and even grab. All this is taking place two months before what in the "olden" days was called the "quickenings"-- the first time I will be felt by my mother.

Week 10 -- At this stage, I am perfectly formed. I even have fingerprints. I can squint, swallow, retract my tongue. My hair is growing. It will be bright and shiny and auburn in color. I wonder what color of hair my mom and dad have. Will I favor my grandparents? Although it is dark all around me, I am just about able to

## **Life and Death Before Birth -- A Journal Account**

see. When my mom brings me into the world, it will be full of sunshine and trees to climb. I want more than anything to see my mom. Do I look like you, Mom?

Week 12 -- I can breath (fluid), suck my thumb, taste, cry, swallow, sleep and wake, and all organ systems are functioning, including mental. I am moving my arms and legs, inhaling and exhaling amniotic fluid, and my finger nails are appearing. Do you suppose my mom hears the whispering of my heart? I know that some children come into the world with physical problems but I am healthy and strong. My heart beats so evenly: lup-dup, lup-dup. The ultrasound will show that you have a healthy little son, Mom! Science will tell you that a fetus of 12 weeks is not essentially different from one of 22 weeks or one of 32 weeks. Beyond 12 weeks, nothing new is formed. Now weighing about one ounce and stretching almost three inches long, I just continue to grow rapidly. I am developing separately from you, Mom. I have my own blood supply. My life is not my mother's life; I cling to it as much as she clings to hers.

Week 13 -- THIS MAY BE MY LAST ENTRY; THEY ARE COMING FOR ME NOW. I JUST WISH I COULD KNOW WHAT I'VE DONE TO DESERVE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. COULDN'T MY MOTHER HAVE BEEN PRO-CHOICE BEFORE CONCEPTION AND PRO-LIFE AFTER CONCEPTION? WHAT IS THIS THEY ARE DOING -- DEATH IN THE NAME OF LIFE? OH NO, THE WOMB IS GOING TO BECOME MY TOMB! HEY, THIS IS TERRORISM, HUMAN SACRIFICE, HOLOCAUST, CIVIL WAR. I AM TOO YOUNG TO DIE! WHATEVER HAPPENED TO LIVE AND LET

# Life and Death Before Birth -- A Journal Account

LIVE? LET ME DECIDE. HEY, DON'T I GET A NAME, OR EVEN A PROPER BURIAL? WHY WON'T MY MOTHER LOVE ME? WHY WON'T MY COUNTRY SAVE ME? ...



## 7. WHEN THE WOMB BECOMES A TOMB

The dates reported in the aforementioned journal are approximate dates signifying when specific functions and development commence. All are well documented in medical journals, with some slight variations. To one who is intellectually honest, the conclusion is quite clear: life and its processes are present at fertilization. A new being has been created. Henceforth nothing else will be needed, except nutrition.

All of the vigorous activity described above occurs in the first half of pregnancy. The mother and the baby are separate individuals from conception. All characteristics have already been determined including skin pigmentation, sex, and intelligence potential. The individual's life as described below consists of continually overlapping and progressive stages of growth and development. All that is needed is nourishment and time to grow.

*All that is needed is nourishment and time to grow.*

The life described in the journal did not have a chance to experience birth at nine months. But please note that life does not begin at birth. Birth is only an occasion marking the change of residence of an already-living, active person. By week twelve the face has assumed the baby's profile and muscle movements

## When the Womb Becomes a Tomb

are more coordinated. The baby now exercises more energetically, turning its head, curling its toes, opening and closing its mouth.

Had the baby been allowed to develop into the fourth month, the mother would be starting to "show." The baby's ears would be functioning and there is some evidence that it would be soothed by the mother's voice and her heart beat as well as other external noises. The umbilical cord, an engineering marvel, would be transporting 300 quarts of fluids per day, completing the round trip of fluids every 30 seconds.

Before that last journal entry, there was life. Now, there has been a death in the name of life. Parents may not have wanted that child. God does: "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven (Matthew 18:10)."

## 8. A NATIONAL PRAYER FOR LIFE

by E.J. Brennan

We came forth from many quarters,  
one hundred thousand strong,  
to focus our nation's conscience  
on a gross and serious wrong.  
Nearly thirty million children  
were aborted from the womb,  
a plastic bag their only shroud,  
a garbage can their tomb.

No comrades fought on either flank.  
No sword or shield did fend.  
Their nation left them on their own.  
Alone they met their end.  
No caisson bore them to their grave,  
less friends and florals too.  
For them no flag was flown half-mast.  
For them no bugle blew.

We weep for this our nation,  
which feeds upon its youth,  
for its eyes are sadly blinded  
to equality and truth.  
We pray for this our nation:  
May this bloody slaughter cease,  
So our God who gave it freedom  
may restore to it His Peace.



## 9. LIFE BEGINS AT CONCEPTION -- MEDICAL TESTIMONY

by

Paul A. Byrne, M.D., Neonatologist

*Dr. Byrne is chairman of the pediatrics department at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut. On September 28, 1989, he addressed the question of when human life begins in the following testimony at a special hearing on abortion sponsored by Connecticut's House-Senate Judiciary Committee. That testimony follows (courtesy of the American Life League):*

1. I am Paul A. Byrne, a Doctor of Medicine. I reside in Bridgeport, Connecticut and I am licensed to practice medicine in Connecticut and Missouri. I attended St. Louis University Medical School and obtained my M.D. in 1957. I am certified by the American Board of Pediatrics (1963) and the Sub-Board of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine of the American Board of Pediatrics (1975). I have been on a faculty of a medical school for 28 years. As a neonatologist I have taken care of many ill newly born and prematurely born infants. Often a neonatologist is consulted by the obstetrician before delivery, thus it is required that we have knowledge about the baby before he or she is born.
2. A new human life begins at conception when the sperm providing half the chromosomes penetrates the ovum, providing the other half of the chromosomes to form a new set of chromosomes.

## **Life Begins at Conception -- Medical Testimony**

Or, to consider it from the aspect of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), half the DNA is provided by the ovum, the other half by the sperm, to form new DNA. The new DNA, the new set of chromosomes, is different from the DNA or the chromosomes of the father, different from the DNA or the chromosomes of the mother. The DNA is the genetic material present and duplicated in each and every cell of the body; it has the biochemical identity of a particular human being subsequently duplicated in the nucleus of every cell of that particular individual.

At conception the external characteristics used later for identification of the individual person -- namely, the color of the hair, the color of the skin, the color of the eyes, the sex, and the fingerprints -- are already determined. The DNA and the chromosomes are the constituents of the nucleus of this first cell. The nucleus is surrounded by the cytoplasm which is limited in space by the cell membrane. The new human being, the new human organism, has the structure of a human being at this stage of development. Before, as well as after birth, growth and development occur. However, this growth and development is dependent upon environmental support.

3. The heart is beating at 21-23 days. Brain waves have been recorded at 43-45 days. (Handbook of Clinical Neurology, Vol. 30, p. 28, 1944). At eight weeks, when all the organs are present, the medical name of the human being changes from embryo to

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fetus. The medical name remains fetus until changed to infant at birth, which is the time a change of residence occurs. As far as reaching a determination as to when human life begins, there are no significant changes occurring at birth.

4. At all stages of development from conception to adulthood, biochemical identity is present in the nucleus of each and every cell. At all stages of development there is structure that is wholly and only human. Before and after birth an appropriate environment is always necessary for life to be supported. Thus, from conception, the new human being has a particular identity, oneness, structure, internal metabolism and relationship to the environment, and occupies a limited space. These are the basic elements of the human structure essential to human life, and their presence clearly establishes the existence of human life. Without this structure no human functions can occur.
  
5. Knowledge of the activities and development of new human life has greatly increased and has been generally disseminated over the past 17 years. This recent burgeoning of knowledge concerning fetal activity and development has occurred because of the more general and experienced use of ultrasonography in examining and observing the fetus, and medical-scientific breakthroughs in the study of amniotic fluid.

As a result of the more general and experienced use of ultrasonography, it is now clear that at a very

## **Life Begins at Conception -- Medical Testimony**

early age the fetus moves -- and does so with purpose. The fetus roots, sucks his or her thumb, and seeks out a position of comfort allowing for growth with minimal physical constriction. Ultrasonography has confirmed and clarified the fact of movements of the chest of the fetus. These are the movements that after birth will be breathing movements. Confirmation of this fact combined with analysis of the amniotic fluid has substantiated that fluid is formed in the lungs, which is then ejected into the amniotic fluid, an occurrence necessary for intrauterine physiology. Thus, due to great advances in the use of ultrasonography and the study of the amniotic fluid (as well as other related developments), medical knowledge concerning fetal development and when human life begins has significantly and quantitatively increased since 1973.

6. It is now possible for the fetus to survive outside the uterus 18-20 weeks after conception. The technical capabilities for keeping these infants warm, providing ventilatory support, as well as improving nutrition through parenteral routes, have greatly improved since 1973. In 1976, the F.D.A. approved the use of intravenous fat to provide nutrition for these prematurely born infants. Currently, oxygen-bearing perfluorocarbons, also known as "liquid air," are being perfected as a means of ventilating premature babies whose lungs are too immature to breathe air; in August 1989, researchers at Temple University reported promising results in both animal and human experimental tests.

## Life Begins at Conception -- Medical Testimony

7. Many textbooks on human embryology state that a new human life begins at conception. (See, e.g., Langman, *Medical Embryology*, p. 3 (1963): "The development of a new individual commences with fertilization"; Thomas, *Introduction to Human Embryology*, p. 52 (1968): "Fertilization is significant in that new life is created ..."; O'Rahilly, *Developmental Stages in Human Embryos*, p. 9 n.1: "... 'the initiation of new life' occurs at that moment when fertilization 'is completed by fusion of the two sets of chromosomes'"; Arey, *Developmental Anatomy*, p. 55 (1965): "The formation, maturation and meeting of a male and female sex cell are all preliminary to their actual union into a combined cell, or zygote, which definitely marks the beginning of a new individual." These texts are recognized as authoritative in the medical profession; I am personally familiar with them, and it is my opinion, based upon a reasonable degree of medical certainty, that their representations concerning when human life begins are accurate.

I have never read a medical text or heard of any medical doctor writing or stating that what exists at conception is not a new human life. I have read, however, that some believe that a new human life begins at implantation in the uterus, which occurs about one week after conception. However, successful in vitro fertilization (fertilization outside the womb, i.e., in a culture dish or test tube) has now made it possible to observe the new human life immediately after fertilization and, therefore, observe the cells divide prior to implantation. Observation of

## **Life Begins at Conception -- Medical Testimony**

this development provides further evidence that human life begins at conception.

Moreover, if one defines viability as the potential "to live outside the mother's womb, albeit with artificial aid" (Roe vs. Wade; 410 U.S. 113, 160 (1973)), in vitro fertilization would seem to have moved the date of viability back to conception. Clearly, upon and after fertilization, the new human life does survive outside the mother's womb for several cell divisions. Currently, with in vitro fertilization, after several cell divisions it facilitates continued growth to move this new human life to the more natural habitat of the womb.

Some day, moving the new human life to the womb may be unnecessary. Having successfully performed in vitro fertilization, all that is now necessary for full development of the new human life outside the womb is a determination of what is necessary to sustain new human life and then invent and produce an artificial womb. Should this occur, we could have fully developed living human beings who would not be human life under the definition of human life that requires implantation. However, under a definition of human life that rests upon viability as defined above, this living human being is human life from conception, since his or her fertilization and full development would occur outside the womb.

8. Thus, for the reasons stated above and based upon my knowledge, skill, experience, training and

## **Life Begins at Conception -- Medical Testimony**

education, it is my expert medical opinion that it is a fact that human life begins at conception.

9. I am familiar with the subject of abortion through reading and study. The most common methods of induced abortion are vacuum, curettage, saline, prostaglandin, and hysterotomy. It is my opinion, based upon a reasonable degree of medical certainty, that abortion destroys human life. Simply stated, before abortion there is life, after abortion there is death.

Postscript: According to Focus on the Family, in 1984, 61 physicians (including two past presidents of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology) signed a statement entitled "The Utmost Respect for Human Life," which reads in part, "We urge all those engaged in the abortion debate to recognize that a central issue in the discourse must include acceptance of the fact that induced abortion causes the death of a living human." They indeed see what God has long ago decreed.



## 10. ABORTION AND THE FUTURE -- MEDICAL TESTIMONY

by C. Everett Koop, M.D.

*Dr. Koop, former Surgeon General of the United States and former Surgeon-in-chief at Philadelphia's Children's Hospital, is one of the world's most prominent surgeons. He has spent a life time studying the attitudes and trends of man's view of man from a medical perspective.*

Abortion is not a medical problem. It is a social problem. Doctors have been asked to become social executioners in order to bring about a better society -- a far cry from the high calling to the healing art of medicine. But have we produced a better society?

We were told in the days before the Supreme Court abortion decisions that abortion-on-demand would reduce child abuse. Instead, child abuse has climbed by nearly 400 percent since 1973, even though we have prevented the birth of some 30 MILLION unwanted children through abortion.

We were told that abortion made legal would do away with illegal, dangerous abortions. Yet the experience in every country, including America, where abortion-on-demand became a legal right, is that illegal abortions increase rather than decrease.

We were told that we would have better sexual morality, but instead we have tremendous numbers of teen-age pregnancies resulting from sex education programs which deny a moral code and encourage a

## **Abortion and the Future -- Medical Testimony**

hedonistic life style. Abortion is presented as a back-up to contraceptive failure in this "do your own thing" life style.

The cheapening of human life brought about by abortion-on-demand has, like falling dominoes, brought two other curses upon our society. This first is "infanticide," the "killing" of a newborn baby by active or passive means because he is considered to have a life not worth living. What started off to be a woman's right to abortion-on-demand has become a woman's legal right to a dead baby.

Inasmuch as a woman has the right to a dead baby, does she not have the right to a dead baby outside the womb as well as inside the womb? Apparently she does! Medical journals published in the U.S. carry clear indication that doctors are practicing infanticide, and yet the law has apparently turned its back. Infanticide in reality is homicide.

The second curse is euthanasia, or so called "mercy-killing," the termination of the life of a dependent individual allegedly for his own benefit. Today, we receive reports about elderly people in HEW approved nursing homes who are not having their infections and fever symptoms treated. The reasons have very little to do with limitations in medicine.

Frequently, such decisions are made by staff personnel based on social problems of the patient in question, such as the frequency of visitation by the family, the number of nursing hours required per week,

## **Abortion and the Future -- Medical Testimony**

and the general acceptability of the patient with the nursing home staff. Who knows what the next domino might be, as we systematically cheapen human life and undermine the family structure so essential to the future of our society?

When doctors are willing to become social executioners for millions of babies, we must examine what motives are used in justifying their actions. Usually, reasons given include preserving the life of the mother, the expectation of a defective child, rape, and incest. Even if these were valid reasons, they would account for only three percent of all abortions. A full 97 percent of abortions occur for matters of convenience and economy.

When doctors are willing to counsel the parents of a newborn child with a congenital defect to allow the child to starve to death, we should examine this motive as well. The typical answer is that these youngsters have a "life not worthy to be lived." Leo Alexander, the American psychiatric representative to the Nuremberg trials, in trying to bring the origins of the Holocaust to the lowest common denominator, said that it all began with that concept that there was such a thing as human life not worthy to be lived.

Certainly, we have come to an age where the Hippocratic tradition of preserving human life means little. One could say without hesitation that we are at the crossroads of the corruption of medicine with the corruption of law.

## Abortion and the Future -- Medical Testimony

Postscript: Angela E. Hunt, author of *The Hidden Holocaust* projects this scenario: "Abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia are ... dominoes in a line; abortion has fallen, infanticide is tottering, and euthanasia may soon follow."

## 11. DEATH IN THE NAME OF LIFE

The two views of life and death of the unborn are inexorably linked. The abortionists, to be successful in promoting their cause, must portray their approach as guilt-free and all other alternatives, including adoption, as neither viable nor proper. To the contrary, before conception there is a choice. After conception there is a baby.

We must sound the call, that there is another road not taken which, if taken, will allow birthmothers to put aside some of their personal needs for a few months and have the confidence they have chosen the best course -- adoption.

The big lie coming from the abortion lobby is that "adoption is the worst thing you can do for a child." Alice would have loved this Wonderland. Isn't it ironic that all of the pro-abortion people have already been born?

"Give peace a chance" is a popular chant of pacifists in times of war. Believe it or not, more unborn babies were killed last year in America, and in every one of the last 23 years, than were killed in all the wars in America's 220 year history.

In all the wars in which U.S. servicemen have been involved in over two centuries, 1.2 million Americans have died. As you read this, an unborn baby dies every 20 seconds, without fanfare. No newspaper obituaries, no funerals, just death in the name of life.

## Death in the Name of Life

The unborn babies die without the benefit of due process guaranteed by the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments:

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury ... nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb ... nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law ... nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

*Far from safeguarding the mother's life, the maternal death rate from abortions is four times higher than it is for natural childbirth.*

They fall at the rate of 4,000 a day. Less than one percent of these abortions are for hardship cases such as rape, deformity, incest, and threat to the mother's life. Even in the cases of rape, judges rarely will set a death penalty for the rapist. The guilty father usually gets a few years punishment. However, the innocent baby in the womb may get capital punishment. What has this baby done wrong at all? Where is the fairness in all of this by creating a second victim?

## Death in the Name of Life

Certainly this is not being done in the name of dealing with overpopulation. A large number of economists and agronomists tell us that the earth is very underpopulated and could handle ten times the present population. Only 15 percent of potential agricultural land is currently being cultivated; when there are famines the root cause is usually more to do with government policies than with farming strategies.

Dr. Robert Sassone, author of *The Population Handbook*, has offered a \$1,000 reward to anyone who can suggest a valid reason why we must limit population in the next century. He has had no takers. Certainly there is no population explosion in America as there is in some third world nations.

So many myths abound about abortion. And yet the facts are quite clear. Nationally, 82 percent of women obtaining abortions are unmarried. This strongly suggests that abortion is used as a form of birth control. In the United States today nearly one in three pregnancies ends in abortion. Do we realize what we are saying? Nearly one-third of the babies conceived this year will not be born.

How will we ever explain this to our Creator? According to the Bureau of Vital Statistics, far from safeguarding the mother's life, the maternal death rate from abortions is four times higher than it is for natural childbirth (7.7 deaths per 10,000 abortions v. 1.84 deaths per 10,000 births, as reported by Cincinnati Hospital). Several Japanese studies found that more

## Death in the Name of Life

than one-third of mothers of aborted babies also had mental problems later.

## 12. THE CHOICE OF A NEW GENERATION?

Presently a slight majority of Americans are reported as being pro-life as opposed to the so-called pro-choice abortionists' option. I would feel no differently if even, as some groups report it, a majority of Americans are pro-abortion. As the Apostle Paul has said in Romans 6:1, "Shall we sin all the more that grace may abound."

Curiously, when the actual word "abortion" is used in the opinion surveys, Americans are purportedly opposed to it by a margin of three to two. Some surveys have also shown that this issue is more important to women than it is to men. Fellas, maybe there is the solution to some of this -- if we could just get our men to stand by their women and step forward and help raise these children.

*When the actual word "abortion" is used in the opinion surveys, Americans are opposed to it by a margin of three to two.*

Is there a ray of hope? Yes. Abortions are on the decline; today there are fewer places in America that perform the procedure. In the last decade, more than 500 U.S. hospitals and clinics have stopped offering abortions. *The Washington Post* reported last year that "some older doctors have become disillusioned ... Many of them believe that abortion has become overused as a form of after-the-fact birth control."

## The Choice of a New Generation?

And in case we didn't notice, pro-life candidates have been winning public office now at an extraordinary rate, both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. In 1992, of the 36 House incumbents who lost, 34 were pro-choice.

The abortionists claim that a woman has the right to her own body. However, the unborn child is not her body. The genetic code of the child that is unborn is different than that of the mother's. The unborn child may not even be of the same sex as the mother. The unborn child may have a different blood type than the mother. Therefore, the newborn is a new, unique human life.

Candidly, the pro-life forces have not been totally truthful about the Roe v. Wade decision. I don't know if it was willful or just an oversight. However, the truth is that the Justices declared that during the first trimester, abortion should be available on demand; that is when 90 percent of all abortions occur today.

In the second trimester, the right remains, but the state can regulate the procedure. During the third trimester, when the fetus is very viable and has been for some time, the state has an interest in preserving life and can bar abortions except those meant to preserve the mother's life or health. So technically, so-called abortion-on-demand for the entire nine months is stretching the point a bit.

### 13. DEALING WITH HUMAN SACRIFICE

I was very impressed with the comments my son made on the written essay text portion of his medical school application:

When I was born, abortion was illegal in most states. There wasn't much information available about the circumstances of my birth, but I have to wonder if I would exist today, had I been conceived in the 1980's or the 1990's. I have a very high regard for human life because of my circumstances. I would like to give others what has been given to me -- life. I have high moral and ethical standards and a true interest in the well-being of mankind. I intend to make it my goal to help people gain mobility, battle against needless suffering and premature death. As an adopted child, I sense that my life's mission is to pay back through a life of medical service, that gift that was given to me many years ago.

Helen Westover was at one time a pro-choice feminist. Writing in *All About Issues*, she describes "the hardest case of all," which has to deal with how the pro-choice debate wounds adoptees:

Every syllable of the pro-abortion rhetoric wounds the adoptee. Many of us struggle with feelings of low self-esteem due to abandonment and rejection to which we feel we were subjected. When adoptees hear "choice-speak," it cruelly reinforces all that

## Dealing with Human Sacrifice

self-doubt. Adoptees are another group of people who are injured by the pro-choice rhetoric. The Adopted People for Life Organization encourages adoptees in general to enter the pro-life struggle because it is our struggle. Our pre-born brothers and sisters, who in a saner time would have been adopted, are targets of the abortion slaughter, the millions whose luck ran out on January 22, 1973.

"Pro-life is pro-woman," says Dale O'Leary in *All About Issues*:

Pro-lifers must make it clear that pro-abortion feminists are wrong about women. Women are tough enough to protect their babies. Chastity is pro-woman; marriage and family are pro-woman. Women do not have to despair. As pro-life women we must bring our experiences forward. We know that women can stand up in difficult situations; we know that women are strong and courageous. We must reject the rhetoric of despair. We must give every woman hope.

Real women must stand up and be counted, but we want real men standing with us. Men, don't be afraid of being called male chauvinists or patriarchal sexist oppressors. Continue to stand up for the family, for the real equality between men and women, and for life. We have to feel sorry for the pro-

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abortion women. They always look so angry. I think it is because they have such miserable lives.

Abortion oppresses women; it teaches women that men can't be counted on. It breeds hardness and disrespect towards women in the hearts of men. It puts a wall up between men and women that affects every part of their relationship. One of the big differences between pro-life women and pro-abortion women is that pro-life women are treated with respect by pro-life men. We are not oppressed. The pro-life movement is a wonderful example of how men and women can work together with true equality.

*I'm pro-choice in the sense that we should let the baby decide about his or her future naturally.*

The pro-life movement must take back the question of women. We must build a coalition of women -- from all races, all creeds and all walks of life -- united in one thing: that the pro-abortion, anti-family, radical feminists don't speak for us. We must put forward articulate spokeswomen and demand to be heard. We must show the world that pro-life is pro-woman.

## Dealing with Human Sacrifice

Frederica Matthewes-Green is editor of *Sister Life*. Here are her words as printed in an article titled "Designated Unperson," courtesy of *All About Issues*:

The pre-born is not a part of his mother's body anymore than an astronaut is part of his spaceship. The fact is that neither is viable without necessary access to oxygen, food, and shelter does not prove that they are not persons. Both the fetus and the astronaut are tenants, though in the case of the pre-born it cannot be denied that he can be an uncomfortable and demanding one. Does this give the mother the right to evict her unwanted tenant? The situation may be like that of the sea captain who discovers a stowaway and considers whether to throw him over board.

The missing factor in the analogy is that the pre-born did not take up residence in his mother's body under his own free will, but was called into being (in virtually all cases) by a consciously-chosen act that the participants were aware could have resulted in pregnancy. For both parents, undertaking to have sexual relations must be accompanied by a responsible recognition that the child may result.

That this result disproportionately taxes the woman, that the man can walk out, abandoning his responsibility to her and his

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child, does not prove that it is right for the woman to do the same. Choices that lead to greater responsibility, greater accountability, are choices that lead to a stronger society for women and their children, and men as well. Choices that feed the cycle of needless abandonment hurt us all.

Postscript: Life is about dealing intelligently and realistically with options. Former President Gerald Ford, also an adopted child, said this on whether or not he misses the White House, as a result of being edged out of the re-election campaign of 1976: "I have always had the attitude, whatever you do, you do your best; and if you win, fine. If you lose, there's another game down the street." Again, I'm pro-choice in the sense that we should let the baby decide about his or her future naturally. How can it be otherwise?



## 14. GOD IS PRO-LIFE

Chapter 5 contained 22 scriptures from both the Old and New Testaments. There is one more which, like the others, is free standing in its own right. It makes a powerful statement:

*"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for such is the kingdom of God (Mark 10:14)."*

Rosalynne Bush, writing in *Family Voice*, has a wonderful analogy to give us a historical perspective on the fact that adoption is Biblical:

In Biblical times adoption and foster parenting were quite common. Early Christians experienced adoption first-hand. Many rescued unwanted, abandoned infants and gave them good homes. Many adopted children received the same inheritance and status as those born to the parents. It's not surprising that God used the concept of adoption to explain His relationship to believers. Salvation is synonymous to being accepted into God's family. We have been grafted into God's family tree, becoming co-heirs with Christ. Our Father had such a high opinion of adoption that He chose to place His son Jesus in the care of an adoptive father --Joseph, the husband of Mary.

I can only quote it from memory as I have misplaced Dr. James Dobson's *Newsletter* of a few years back. Therein, he had a lengthy and penetrating

## God is Pro-Life

testimony by a physician struggling with life and death issues at birth. Here is what I remember:

The young medical doctor was seriously considering letting a deformed baby girl suffocate in the birth canal ... just then, the baby's hand and arm thrust out as if to push him away ... the doctor went ahead and delivered the baby, and apologizing to the parents for the legacy of this handicapped child that he had saddled them with ... if only, he thought, he had delayed the birth two or three more minutes this terrible tragedy could have been avoided . . .

... Twenty years later, he listened to a wonderful orchestral ensemble entertain a hospital group in which he was a member ... The young lady playing the harp especially caught his eye ... after the performance was over a middle-aged couple rushed up to him and said, "You probably don't remember us, do you? Did you see her? Did you see her?" ... Out of the corner of his eye he could see a beautiful young lady with a slight limp walking toward him

... This was the baby girl he had delivered two decades earlier ... They thanked him for her life ... He broke down and wept and asked the young lady if she would play something on her harp for him ... She played a beautiful Christmas type religious hymn,

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"Silent Night" ... He wept openly and told her that a great burden had finally been lifted from his life ...

Dr. Dobson in replying to abortionists, including some medical doctors, has said this, "Don't you see what a philosophical hole you have dug by denying the dignity of humanness to every unborn child? If you withhold that status at conception, you have an impossible assignment of deciding where to grant it later on. And, of course, to err is to commit murder in the eyes of God."

In promoting healing, how to disagree without being disagreeable -- that is the question. Charles Colson has said that in some ways the pro-life protest has backfired, as news footage shows Christians screaming and waving their Bibles with faces twisted with hate and anger.

Colson says that "we must woo people's hearts towards righteousness." We wound our witness of the truth of the Gospel and the love of Jesus Christ when we go around bayoneting the walking wounded instead of being a hospital for those in need. Confrontations reduced to shouting matches only rub salt into already open wounds being felt by the traumatized birthmothers as they try to deal with their pregnancies. Here is how Colson puts it:

A broken world will see either our faces twisted in hate or anger or they see the face of Christ, listening, serving, speaking the

truth in love. The consequences of that choice go beyond even the saving of innocent lives. Let's not let our stridency play into the hands as those who would characterize Christians as stabbing both our neighbors and our cause itself. We should all be fighting this battle for unborn lives, seeking both to rescue the perishing and to pierce the callous conscience of a nation that has chosen to allow the killing.

Moreover, I like Dr. Dobson's non-confrontational attitude and tone in general toward the debate: "So what is left for us, interpersonally? We must simply agree to disagree and respond to one another with love and compassion. I hereby extend that friendship to you despite our differences. Until we are granted His infinite wisdom on the other side, that's the best we can do."

## 15. BIBLICAL REMEDIES TO PROMOTE HEALING

In my teaching of economic history, I take great pleasure in recounting a few paragraphs from *Democracy in America*, written in the 1830's by eminent French political observer Alexis de Tocqueville. He came to America searching for the key to our greatness:

I sought for the greatness and the genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and boundless forests, and it was not there.

I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her vast public school system and her institutions of learning, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her matchless constitution, and it was not there.

Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.

American church religion, de Tocqueville wrote, is "a political institution which powerfully contributes to the

## Biblical Remedies to Promote Healing

maintenance of a democratic republic among the Americans" by supplying a strong moral consensus amidst continuous political change.

I have always believed whatever our circumstances, we should make our peace with our Creator on His terms and live to be neither ashamed of yesterday nor fearful of tomorrow:

*"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people (Proverbs 14:34)."*

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)."*

*"Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin (Psalm 51:2)."*

*"Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow (Psalm 51:7)."*

*"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me (Psalm 51:10)."*

*"Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you (Psalm. 51:12-13)."*

## **Biblical Remedies to Promote Healing**

*"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people (Proverbs 14:34)."*

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance (Psalm 33:12)."*

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear them from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land (II Chronicles 7:14)."*

*"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain (Psalm 127:1)."*

*"Oh that my people had harkened unto me ... and had walked in my ways (Psalm 81:13)."*

*"Let every soul be subject unto the highest powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13:1)."*

*"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the King (I Peter 2:17)."*

According to the American Victims of Abortion Organization, "every baby who dies in an abortion has a mother, father, grandparents, a whole family whose

## **Biblical Remedies to Promote Healing**

lives are connected to that little life. Each one of these people is affected by abortion's tragedy in some way through a post-abortion syndrome of long-lasting feelings of pain, anger, and grief."

We need to remember that the pre-born person is part of the human family and deserves our welcome. There is some indication that the post-abortion syndrome is so disturbing and alarming to the individuals that it exceeds the trauma of the pre-abortion period of decision-making, according to the AVA.

If that is so, then there is much to be done in the area of post-abortion healing. "Compassion without compromise" is how my minister, Bruce McLarty, put it recently.

## 16. A PRAYER FOR HUMANITY

Former Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, Peter Marshall, once delivered this Independence Day prayer. I believe it fits best here:

*God of our Fathers, whose Almighty Hand has made and preserved our Nation, grant that our people may understand what it is they celebrate.*

*May they remember how bitterly our freedom was won, the down payment that was made for it, the installments that have been made since this Republic was born and the price that must yet be paid for our liberty.*

*May freedom be seen not as the right to do as we please, but as the opportunity to please do what is right. May it ever be understood that our liberty is under God and can be found nowhere else. May our faith be something that is not merely stamped upon our coins, but expressed in our lives.*

*Let us, as a nation, not be afraid of standing alone for the rights of men, since we were born that way, as the only nation on earth that came into being "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith."*

## **A Prayer for Humanity**

*We know that we shall be true to the Pilgrim dream when we are true to the God they worshiped. To the extent that America honors Thee, will Thou bless America and keep her as Thou has kept her free, and make her good as Thou hast made her rich, Amen.*

## 17. THAT WONDERFUL ADOPTION OPTION

The facts are troubling. It is hardly a very positive "choice for a new generation" that one out of every three pregnancies ends by abortion. I don't know where or how this current generation developed a notion that it is not socially acceptable to consider the adoption option.

Apparently, in the minds of many people, the abortionists have done a pretty thorough job of destroying the other viable options available to a pregnant mother. We must do a better job of passing the word. The adoption option may be the greatest story never told, even though it is a "win-win" situation for everyone concerned. We especially need to get counselors of our young people to do their homework on this issue.

It is a far different world today from the early 1970's when we adopted our children. We had to wait a little longer for our daughter in 1973 than we did for our son in 1971. The reason was obvious: the Roe v. Wade decision handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22, 1973. Thereby, abortions on demand were legalized, especially and liberally in the first trimester of life and with certain conditions in the second and third trimester.

I shall never forget January 22, 1993. Our then 20 year-old daughter and I were watching a special on CNN commemorating the 20th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade. We watched it in silence broken finally by these words by my daughter, "Dad, was I in my birthmother's womb at the time the Roe v. Wade decision was

## That Wonderful Adoption Option

handed down?" I replied, "Yes indeed; you were just barely into the second trimester of life."

She watched the program a little while longer, stood up, and in mock wiping of perspiration off her brow made this pronouncement, "Whew!" I greatly appreciated and sensed her relief. Over 30 million babies have not been so fortunate in the last 23 years.

*The adoption option may well be the greatest story never told, even though it is a "win-win" situation for everyone concerned.*

According to *U.S.A. Today*, the statistics that shape our nation are a bit scary. Prior to 1973, 19% of Caucasian babies and 2% of African-American babies were put up for adoption by their unwed mothers. Today the figure is 3% for Caucasian mothers and 1% for the African-American mothers.

I was not aware of it at the time that I spoke at Christian Homes' 30th Annual Celebration of Life Dinner in November 1993, but the week of November 19-25 is National Adoption Week. I would hope that at least that week every year we would express a very positive attitude toward adoption and manifest a fuller understanding of both the sorrow and joy that adoption brings to those involved. It is also my prayer that this attitude may continue all throughout the year.

## That Wonderful Adoption Option

### Ode to an Adopted Child

Not flesh of my flesh,  
nor bone of my bone;  
but still miraculously  
my own.

Never forget  
for a single minute  
you didn't grow under my heart,  
but in it.



## 18. YOUR MOTHER WAS PRO-LIFE

Dave Thomas, the founder and senior chairman of Wendy's International, Inc., is a leading advocate of corporate adoption benefits. According to John Nesbitt's *Trendletter*, Wendy's pays up to \$4,000 to employees who adopt healthy children and \$6,000 if a child has special needs. Adoptive parents can take off as much as six weeks in paid time. Other companies are following Dave Thomas' lead: American Express, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Aetna Life and Casualty Company. May their tribe increase.

Said Thomas in a recent interview, "My message is to ask corporate America to put in adoption benefits; we need to encourage people to adopt." Thomas' publisher, GT Putnum's Sons, released this statement: "Never knowing his birthparents, Thomas lost his adoptive mother and was raised by a stern, working-class adoptive father. " Dave Thomas was asked by President Bush to be spokesman for "Adoption Works for Everyone."

### For Our Adopted Child

You are not the child of our bodies...  
But you are the child of our hearts...  
You are not flesh of our flesh...  
But you are the joy of our life...

You are the fulfillment of our dreams,  
The answer to our prayers,  
A gift of God  
for which we're truly thankful...

## Your Mother Was Pro-Life

You are wonderfully our own...  
And we love you  
As only parents can love their own...

Bob Parkhill, director of social services for Christian Homes of Abilene, estimates that fewer than half of current unmarried teenage mothers will select the option to give birth to the child in their womb. Of that number, he estimates, only 5 to 10 percent will choose the adoption option.

Considering the adoption statistics prior to 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, the answer is clear. The abortionists seem to be doing a better job in their recruiting than those of us who are pro-life. Where did we lose in the battle of words, so that our young people, in increasing numbers, would think that adoption is worse than abortion?

*The abortionists would like people to believe that there are no parents waiting for these new babies.*

Surveys of young people indicate that they are pushing adoption farther down the list of options. As Parkhill says, "We have failed to teach the sanctity of life." I really believe that it's part of a bigger problem connected with the baby busters -- the X Generation. There is a prevalent attitude with them, and yet it is as

## Your Mother Was Pro-Life

old as Cain and Abel, that "nothing is really wrong if I don't get caught." It's a scary situation.

The abortionists would like people to believe that there are no parents waiting for these new babies. ABC did a special on "20/20" describing the conditions of Romanian orphans in desperate straits, many of them dying from terminal diseases. After the program, over 25,000 people wrote to ABC expressing a wish to adopt these children. Today there are 100 approved families waiting to adopt babies with Downs Syndrome.

And yet, in recent years, several made-for-television movies have put down the adoption option, painting adoption as a way that middle-class couples victimize poor young mothers. I just keep thinking about Edmond Burke declaring that "the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing."

"Feminists," according to Rosalyn Bush, editor of *Family Voice*, "vehemently oppose adoption, declaring that it will destroy women and destroy the institution of the single mother." And just what is the so-called "institution of the single mother?" According to Bush, "These mothers seldom finish their education or land a job. As a result, 60 percent of the children raised by young single mothers end up on welfare rolls" which becomes a self-perpetuating lifestyle.



## 19. LIVE AND LET LIVE

I am grateful that our children's birthmothers developed adoption plans, thereby concluding that chapter of life with compassion and love. Their babies were given life twice, first by being ushered into this world safely at full term and secondly by being placed with our adoptive family.

In the process, the birthmothers preserved their own health and self-worth. As former President George Bush put it (some of his own grown children are also adoptive parents), "Adoption works -- for children who need homes, for people hoping to become parents, and for women facing a crisis pregnancy."

According to the National Council for Adoption there are, at any one time, between one and two million childless couples hoping to adopt in the near future. An average of 1.5 million babies have been aborted each year for over two decades. This isn't rocket scientist stuff here. Why can't we get these folks together?

Consider this "adoption option" correspondence we received years later from Christian Homes President, Nancy Miller:

When you adopted your child from Christian Homes you probably heard us say something like "... the birthmother wanted to provide for her baby through adoption what she could not provide herself." We're still making that same comment. But I want you

## Life and Let Live

to hear it straight from a letter we received from a birthmother who recently placed her baby through Christian Homes:

... Some people still can't understand why I didn't just get an abortion. But it's not for them to understand. Because I'm the one who made the decision and am living with it ... Not a day goes by I won't think about him and wonder how he is. But there will never be a day I'll look back and regret it, either. The day I saw him and held him, I knew I was his mother, but could never have been his parent ... But I also believe that there is a couple that is meant to raise him. If they try half as hard as my parents have, I know it will have been worth my time -- and pain, to give him the opportunity not only to live, but to have the best life possible.

I read a little definition in the church bulletin some years ago that went like this -- a little girl recently gave her definition of "adoption." She said, "It's when you love someone and you ask them to come and live with you." Simplicity is still the best way to say a thing, isn't it? God loves us too, and He has also adopted us as sons. And as our children became Christians early in their second decade, they became honest-to-goodness adopted sons and daughters of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom, forevermore.

## Life and Let Live

We always felt very comfortable talking to our kids about the subject of adoption. As our adopted children, they were deliberately chosen whereas other parents have no choice in the matter. To show that blood kinship is not necessary for genuine love, we used ourselves as an example? Mom and I chose each other, and although we were strangers at one time, as the marriage has progressed we became closer than flesh-and-blood relatives.

*God loves us too, and He has also adopted us as sons.*

And so, our kids could understand that they were chosen for the same reason that Mom and I chose each other -- for genuine love -- and they can see clearly that they belong. We do appreciate so much that they see their membership in our family as the most secure and strongest human bond that there can be.

Never forget, we told our kids, that this means that we love you enough to die for you, enough to discipline you properly, enough to be proud when people praise you, enough to be hurt when you hurt. And, heredity becomes very unimportant, when we consider that we are all related in the large family of God. It became our prayer that their joy in being our child would increase daily as they continue to grow in a special way in the wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, as Jesus did.



## 20. A TALE OF TWO MOTHERS

Once there were two women  
Who never knew each other  
One you do not remember  
The other you call mother

Two different lives shaped  
To make yours one  
One became your guiding star  
The other became your sun

The first gave you life  
The second taught you to live in it  
The first gave you a need for love  
The second was there to give it

One gave you a nationality  
The other gave you a name  
One gave you the seed of talent  
The other gave you an aim

One gave you emotions  
The other calmed your fears  
One saw your first sweet smile  
The other dried your tears

One gave you up -- it was all  
that she could do.  
The other prayed for a child  
And God led her straight to you.

## **A Tale of Two Mothers**

And now you ask me through your tears,  
The age old questions through the  
years:

Heredity or Environment --  
Which are you the product of?

Neither my darling -- neither  
Just two different kinds of love.

-- Anonymous

## 21. A SPECIAL BOND ACROSS THE YEARS

Yes, the reader will note that I still occasionally collect excellent articles from the *Christian Homes Newsletter*. Here is a portion of a recent one from Nancy Miller:

We are often questioned about how young women and their families feel about placing their babies for adoption. It is our firm conviction that with proper counseling and the case work services, these girls and their families can come to terms with their decisions and continue their lives in a healthy emotional state. Adoption can be a very positive result. Portions of a letter from the mother of a young lady in our maternity program written to the baby says it best:

I am writing this to you, should you wonder why you were adopted. It is very important to me that you understand why you were placed for adoption. Your mother, my daughter, gave you up for adoption because she loved you enough that she wanted you to have a better life than you might have, were she to try to keep you. She wanted to be sure that you had the best, so she was willing to lay her feelings aside in order to do her best to assure that you receive the best.

## **A Special Bond Across the Years**

You are doubly loved, you see. You were loved by your mother enough to give you up for a better life, and you were loved by your parents because they loved you enough to take you as their own. Not every one has that much love. Have a happy and fruitful life, always walk with God, and remember that you are loved by many people that may never see you here but who hope to see you in heaven one day. I love you; you are a part of me, my sweet little one.

## 22. PASSING THROUGH REUNION STATION

Life is certainly a lot more complicated today than in the early 1970's when we used to sit down and read the children's story books titled Why Was I Adopted? and The Pretty House that Found Happiness to our young children. Open adoptions of the 1990's are a far cry from the confidentiality and secrecy involved in closed adoptions of yesteryear.

I recently read a book titled Birthbond which chronicled reunions of several dozen adult adopted children with their birthmothers. I had good reason to read it as our son was about to be reunited as a young adult with his birthmother. The momentum toward reunion was driven in part by his concerns as a medical student, and as a new daddy himself, for a more complete health history, and also by his birthmother's medical situation as a recent cancer survivor.

Together, and over two years, we tiptoed into and through the reunion visits which went very well indeed. It was almost as if we were attending a class reunion after two decades and doing some power catching up on everyone's lives. The results were very good. Every case is different. Events come into play, setting things in motion. Reunions can interrupt lives and redefine relationships in both positive and negative ways. I don't bind our approach on anyone; it's a free country.

### That Special Gift

There is a girl that I do not know.  
I don't even know her name.  
I would never recognize her face,  
but I love her just the same.

## Passing Through Reunion Station

And now everyday I see her face,  
And I look into her eyes.  
And though she disappeared without a trace,  
I can hear her faintest cries.

She gave a special gift to me.  
For which without a doubt God smiled.  
She saved a life and gave birth to my family.  
I love her, birthmother of my child.

I see all the things she used to do,  
Every game she ever played.  
As the years go by one thing is true,  
Thoughts of her will never fade.

She gave a special gift to me.  
For which without a doubt God smiled.  
She saved a life and gave birth to my family.  
I love her, birthmother of my child.

I know someday if we chance to meet,  
There is one thing I must say  
Without you I was incomplete,  
and I have loved you from the day...

You gave that special gift to me.  
For which without a doubt God smiled.  
You saved a life and gave birth to my family.  
I love you, birthmother of my child.

-- Anonymous

## **23. PRACTICAL WAYS TO BE A FRIEND OF THE HUMAN FAMILY**

In our pro-life movement to help the unborn, let us not forget the woman who also needs help. Further, let's keep offering those opportunities to those who are considering abortion. I have said it before: the developing pre-born person is part of the human family and deserves our welcome.

Let's educate people at work about this issue. We should express that welcome in the work place by not letting the pregnancy distract from the woman's opportunity for advancement. Ask employers to include adoption benefits in their benefit packages.

A decade ago, Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority had a goal of thousands of maternity homes across the nation, run at no cost to the young mothers or the taxpayers. There, young mothers could opt for carrying their babies to full term with the assurance that adoptive parents were qualified and ready. Presently there are only 200 maternity homes nationwide. The Edna Gladney Center in Fort Worth is the largest, and yet the capacity is only for 144 women.

Our country has the capacity to once again be both moral and generous as we deal with this issue. Certainly we would put as much emphasis with our children on sex education as we would to warn them about drugs. This writer is certainly in favor of parental notification before abortions are performed on teenage young ladies.

## Practical Ways To Be A Friend Of The Human Family

What about tax breaks to foster and encourage adoptions and more foster parenting? Write your elected officials. Press for legislation that favors the adoption option. Examine candidates on pro-life issues at election time. "The state comes to existence that man may live," said Aristotle. Participate in an aggressive advertising campaign for the adoption option.

*"The state comes to existence that man may live."*

-- Aristotle

We can all write letters to the editor. Most of the media is in the other camp and it would be refreshing to have the pro-life, pro-adoption point of view on an editorial page at least occasionally. Contact a radio station and inquire about doing a talk-show on the pro-life issue; be sure to do your homework as tough questions may be asked. Make sure your area libraries have some pro-life books.

It's not just enough to be right. If we deeply care for the life of the mother and the baby, let us change our hearts and open our hands and extend help by being actively involved. Ask your local minister to preach a positive pro-life message. Pray at all times for God's help, as a little girl once said, "Dear Lord, please make the bad people good and the good people nice." Consider having a "Respect for Life" Sunday at your church and do something special on this day that is pro-family.

## **Practical Ways To Be A Friend Of The Human Family**

Build your programs each year around National Adoption week in late November. Sponsor seminars using good quality video aids and literature to groups free of charge. Help organizations with annual march-for-life demonstrations. Go to a local school and give an effective talk on pro-life issues.

Have a Mother's Day message printed and passed out in any organizations to which you belong. Subscribe to some right-to-life publications and keep informed. Wear the "Precious Feet," the international pro-life symbol. Above all, show profound concern for women in crisis pregnancies and facilitate the adoptions of infants into loving and caring families.

In so doing, we shall follow Ronald Reagan's advice and carry the message of the sacredness of every human life into the hearts and minds of every American:

I cannot commend too highly the dedication of young people who are working, struggling, and praying to encourage us to save unborn children and to provide crucial help to mothers with problem pregnancies. We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life -- the unborn -- without diminishing the value of all human life ... there is no cause more important.

Please remember the charge left with that audience at the Annual Celebration Dinner for Christian Homes of Abilene in 1993:

## **Practical Ways To Be A Friend Of The Human Family**

And so, as we "Celebrate Life," I ask you these two final questions: First, "what will you do, in the name of Godly Charity and True Religion, to keep on providing help, assistance, support, love, care, and nurturing for birth mothers?" And second, "what will you also do to keep finding ways, in these complex legal times, that such children can continue to fill the aching voids in the hearts of other childless couples?"

## 24. WE'LL BE THERE

We'll be there ... when you sleep  
through the night.

We'll be there ... when you need us  
to hold you tight.

For the first step you take,  
And the first time you make it  
Clear to the top of the stairs.

When you learn who you are  
Wish on a star ... we'll be there.

We'll be there ... when your words  
turn to rhymes.

Little one, we'll be there ... read you  
stories at bedtime.

When you play at the park,  
when you're scared of the dark,

When you learn how to pray  
your first prayer.

Thunder and storm, when it's cold  
or its warm ...

We'll be there.

We'll be there ... when you skin  
up your knee.

We'll be there ... when you climb  
to the top of the tree.

## We'll Be There

I will teach you to hike,  
ride a two-wheel bike,  
Build a kite that will soar through  
the air.

When you wade through the streams,  
when you dream your first dreams ...  
We'll be there.

And we'll be there ... when you try  
out your wings.  
Yes, we'll be there...when you're  
questioning everything.

When you learn how to choose,  
when you try and you lose,  
When you find that the world isn't fair.  
when you stand or you fall,  
You know through it all,  
Mom and Dad are going to be there.

Thanking God everyday that He  
sent you our way and He trusted  
you once to our care.  
And wherever you roam,  
you can always come home ...  
We'll be there.

-- Anonymous

## 25. COMPLETING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE HUMAN RACE

Cited here is a section from my letter to our own children at graduation (and yes, the personal remembrances really were omitted). No trust is violated in printing the text; before they read it in their senior letter, it was presented by me as part of a topical series on Sunday mornings in teaching a 10th grade Bible class over many years.

Yes, our job as parents has been to protect you, to provide for you and to give you every opportunity both now and in the Hereafter. You started out with a very small world -- your crib and then your playpen. We shall never forget the first time we heard that thud in the hallway, as you had climbed out of your playpen.

We, as all parents, must gradually broaden your horizons room by room, to the yard, to the neighborhood, to the county, etc. In that regard, We'll never forget the time we let you ride your bicycle around the block by yourself for the first time. It seemed an eternity before you came back in view, wobbling down the road.

We know that there will be times when it will be very hard for us to gracefully sever the apron strings and send you out on your way -- to truly and boldly go where no one has gone before. When you turned eighteen, we gave you a factual article that told you about your legal rights as an adult. We marvel at your progress and maturity. We appreciate so much your

## Completing the First Quarter of the Human Race

wonderful honesty, tender heart and good hygiene. We are at a crossroads right now. You have a wonderful adventure ahead of you. We all look forward to being a participant in it with you.

In the May/June 1988 of the Christian Homes Newsletter, Nancy Miller had a fine little article about this particular milestone in their lives:

Graduation Day! What an exciting time in the life of a young person! Receiving graduation announcements is one of those marker times to the staff at Christian Homes -- marking another stage in the lives of some young people placed in adoption seventeen or eighteen years ago. This year's spring graduation announcements received at Christian Homes are the most meaningful.

Many of them came from students placed for adoption my first year at Christian Homes in 1970. And now, these young people are making that next big step into the future. Many of them are going to college; some will begin their working careers; perhaps some are getting married.

Each year as graduation announcements are received in our

## Completing the First Quarter of the Human Race

office, we feel a special degree of satisfaction and accomplishment -- knowing that those children have had their families to love, protect, and guide them to this mark in their lives. We are thankful to have had a part in their beginning, and we will look forward to each year's graduates as we continue to place babies who will be at that special marker time of graduation in their lives in a few years.

Young people, here is a motto that keeps parents going: "Avenge yourselves -- live long enough to be a problem to your children!" Well, in our case, the only concerns we have about the younger generation is that they will probably do a better job with the world's problems than our generation has done.

Sure, there are questions yet to be answered in the future. As our kids sang in their last school program, perhaps they noticed that even our National Anthem ends with a question mark, doesn't it? "Oh, say, does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave -- O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

Come what may, our kids are the trustee of the future, because that is where they will spend the rest of their days. All in all, we are so thankful for their exuberance and confidence that comes from being a young adult.



## 26. LIFE'S DRESS REHEARSAL

When I was in my mid-20's, I was an administrative officer stationed at a Strategic Air Command Air Force Base. There, I worked for a career officer who proudly announced at work one day that he had just kicked his son out of the house. "Why?" I asked.

I will never forget his reply (although I have repeatedly tried). He said, "Because my son just turned 17 yesterday ... My dad kicked me out on my 17th birthday ... My Dad didn't do nothing for me, and I'm not doing nothing for my son." Haven't we learned anything? Children raising children!

As I travel, people often ask me this question, "How are today's students different?" They are different. They "nuke" their food in microwave ovens and "channel surf" with remote controlled TVs. We were so poor -- we had to walk across the room to change channels.

Less patient with anything considered boring, their attention spans value, not "how important" something is, but "how entertaining" it is. This is the legacy of the Nintendo Generation. When we teachers hand back the term papers they write, our students look at the disappointing grade and exclaim, "Hey, I ran 'Spell Check' over it." I don't publish anything until I rewrite it 10-12 times (and mistakes still creep in).

And yes, there does seem to be an attitude today -- our kids probably don't have a monopoly on it -- but it's that attitude which says, "Nothing is really wrong, if

## Life's Dress Rehearsal

I don't get caught." It is a scary attitude wherever it's found.

When did they learn that? (From us, perish the thought?) Maybe it has always been so. It would make a good term paper topic -- (or a book report), referencing accounts in the Scriptures. How far back could we go? -- Cain and Abel? -- last week's headlines?

Genealogies -- The youth of today (those ages 14-34) have the distinguished status of being the 13th generation born in America. They have been labeled by the demographic experts as The "X Generation," "The Baby Busters," or "The Invisible Generation." I've been a skeptic on this -- mostly.

*The Designer of the Universe put spaceship earth here with a guidebook of instructions.*

However, they are different. We Baby Boomers talked back to those in authority. Baby Busters just walk away. What makes them tick? According to the West Coast Barna Research Group, they are "a cause for bewilderment and concern on the part of their parents, grandparents, ministers, employers, and teachers."

## Life's Dress Rehearsal

What else did the researchers learn? Surveys of the X Generation show them to be "skeptical, survival-oriented, stressed-out, self-reliant, pragmatic, and struggling to find an identity. They want to rebel." "The problem is," says researchers, "they don't know what to rebel to." Sound familiar?

It's not that we were placed here to flounder. The Designer of the Universe put spaceship earth here with a guidebook of instructions. We were also given the common sense to seek knowledge and to learn judiciously from others.

As I've chided some graduation audiences in the Mid-South, "Seniors, if you don't want to be a loser in the game of life, watch what losers do --and don't do that! Avoid dumbth, that is, willful ignorance ... Don't make the same mistake twice more than once."

Two ladies were talking about a handicapped orphan child -- one lady had paid for expensive surgery, so he could walk. "Guess where he is today?" she asked. "Well," said the other lady, "is he some great person?" "No, he's in Federal prison -- we taught him how to walk, but we forgot to show him where to walk."

It was rare, but some of our kids' peers and playmates of yesteryear in soccer, football, baseball, and softball did grow up and get in trouble with the law. Whenever we'd see that in the newspaper, I'd remind our grown kids: "As a parent, never underestimate the power of that broken record you heard from us while growing up: Where are you going? When will you be

## Life's Dress Rehearsal

back? What will you be doing? and Whom will you be with?"

This item titled "Father -- In Any Language" is translated from a Dutch magazine and shows that families are much the same the world over:

- ◆ 4 years: My Daddy can do anything.
- ◆ 7 years: My Dad knows a lot, a whole lot.
- ◆ 8 years: My father doesn't know quite everything.
- ◆ 12 years: Oh, well, naturally Father doesn't know that either.
- ◆ 14 years: Father? Hopelessly old-fashioned.
- ◆ 21 years: Oh, that man is out of date; what did you expect?
- ◆ 25 years: He knows a little bit about it, but not much.
- ◆ 30 years: Must find out what Dad thinks about it.
- ◆ 35 years: A little patience; let's get Dad's meaning first.
- ◆ 50 years: What would Dad have thought about that?
- ◆ 60 years: I wish I could talk it over with Dad once more.

Relationships between parents and children are indeed continuously evolving. Alas, we must learn from those who have been around the block a few more times than we have. We won't live long enough to make all their collective mistakes -- as resourceful as we might be behind their backs.

## 27. BONDING LINEAGE AND HERITAGE TOGETHER

In the mid-1970's, and about the time our son (for whom medical school graduation is slated for May, 1997) was starting elementary school, a letter arrived in the mail. It reads in part as follows (the original version was one full page, typed):

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Diffine:

... Your son seems to enjoy games, but he has a tendency toward undue roughness. There have been many complaints lately concerning your son's use of his hands. This often brings group and individual disapproval. For no apparent reason, he strikes out with his fists. Temporary separation from the group seems to help him most. He is a capable boy; he excels in academic pursuits. His paramount need at the present time is control of his hands in his relationships with his classmates ...

Sincerely yours, Edna Johnson

Now get this. The letter came in an envelope from my Mom 25 years after Mrs. Johnson, my First Grade teacher, wrote it on April 11, 1949! And Mom's note to me in the mid-1970's said, "Son, I just found this in some old papers. Thought you'd like to have it at this time, as your children start school. It's called "retribution" – your kids will soon be paying you back for the way you treated us."

## Bonding Lineage and Heritage Together

I remember the incident (though not the letter). I remember Mom accusing me, "You say you've been good. Mrs. Johnson says she had to put you on the bench (Hey, I was good while I was on the bench)."

In the brief time that we will have with our children, as they are growing up, what will we decide to leave them in the way of a legacy? Will we leave them a good name? Will we leave them good memories? Will we leave them a good personal example?

Will we leave them a strong faith? Will they grow up to be the kind of adult that the child they once were would approve of? If so, we are giving them a wonderful legacy -- a heritage which, frankly, I never fully received from my parents.

*Make your home a happy home and a center of joy. Keep those family ties strong.*

Set aside time for your family. Children measure their parents' interest in them in direct proportion to the time they spend with them. Take time to find out what kind of a day every family member had. Make your home a happy home and a center of joy.

Be a good listener. Share your children's and your mate's experiences by listening. Set an example for your children and spouse. Practice what you preach.

## **Bonding Lineage and Heritage Together**

Accept them not only because of, but in spite of, the way they act. Keep those family ties strong. Be available. Do things with your family.

Develop each child's responsibility. Treat each child as an individual to guide and encourage. Teach them to take on responsibility. Understand the true meaning of discipline. Let your authority be motivated by love. There will be times when your children will call you "stupid." You just gather the little darlings in your arms and you say, "Someday you will be a parent, and then you will be stupid, too."

Encourage your children to take their studies seriously. Insist on regular study hours, as much as possible. Teach them to work while they work and play while they play; that's the way to get the most out of every day. Give them a healthy attitude toward sex. Instruct them, and give them reverence for the body and the sanctity of marriage.

And make bedtime the closest time of the day, particularly for your young children. It's a time to talk to each child individually, rub backs, and hug. Never let your children go to bed hearing warnings, cross words, or threats. I wish I could say that I always lived up to that admonition. They somehow arrived at adulthood right side up and on track, if not because of our parenting, perhaps in spite of it. Time will tell.



## 28. TRYING TO RAISE THEM RIGHT

In the summer of 1993, and after we had all survived the teen years at our house, a longtime neighbor startled me with this question: "What did you do to raise such fine kids?" Honestly, I was speechless, and finally managed a feeble, "They are?--Beats me -- Let's wait 50 years until we decide that."

Although we didn't have a formal approach or a code etched in stone, early and often we communicated the following to our kids (we are just now documenting it in writing for the purpose of this book):

- Children need parents, students need teachers, and employees need employers.
- Even smart people can do stupid things.
- This is homework-related -- Even the most fertile soil, if left uncultivated, can produce the rankest weeds.
- Life is really very simple. There are 26 basic letters, 10 basic numbers, 7 basic notes, and 3 basic colors.
- Be truthful; keep us informed, and we'll be your friend and supporter.
- Be dishonest; deceive us, and we'll be your judge and jury.
- We will not be manipulated by you, to wrongly defend you (even though we know that if we don't defend you, nobody will).

## Trying to Raise Them Right

- The Teacher and Principal and Coach are always right -- we're on their side (even when they're wrong).
- There is an attitude which says, "It's not wrong unless you get caught." That attitude is unacceptable.
- "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." --III John 4
- Two parenting approaches can create a monster -- "All love and no rules," and conversely, "All rules and no love."
- You'll get "tough love" from us, no matter what; so ask us questions you know we can say "yes" to.
- You are not to drive alone without an adult in the car before age 16. It's the law.
- Speed, inexperience, and carelessness have no place behind the wheel of a car. Amen?
- We will all do our best to send you to school each day fully prepared and receptive to learn.
- We will continue to read and study about our roles as Moms and Dads, so that if there ever were a Minimum Performance Test for parents, we'd pass it handily.

## Trying to Raise Them Right

- When arguing, consider taking a time out to cut your losses and to do some damage control.
- "Well, Duh!" is an unacceptable response.
- Avoid playmates who use foul language and have mean tempers -- bad news.
- Never wrestle in the mud with a pig; you'll get all dirty and the pig will enjoy it.
- "A good name is better to be chosen than great riches." --Proverbs 22:1.
- Plan your work -- work your plan.
- Work while you work, play while you play -- that's how you get the most out of every day.
- No one can really embarrass you for long, unless they have your assistance.
- There is something worse than losing a so-called boyfriend or girlfriend -- losing yourself.
- Nice guys don't finish last -- nice guys are winners before the game ever starts.
- Try to become the kind of adult that the child you once were would approve of.

## Trying to Raise Them Right

- You cannot pay back our love; you can only pass it on.

Postscript: We need to be there for our children in those formative years. For a decade, Mom and I spent many a boring evening in hot, steamy gymnasiums around our state because our son's or daughter's ball team was there. Sometimes their evening was spent keeping the other end of the bench from flying up when the coach sat down. And yet, at some point during the evening our child would give a faint wave to us from across the gym. And that meant, "Thanks, because if you weren't here, my parents missed it." Mission accomplished.

## 29. ROLE REVERSALS AND GENDER CLASHES

Yes, it has been said in jest that "the good Lord gives us 12 years to learn to love our children before they become teenagers." When there are difficult times, we all need to be reminded that teenagers don't cause difficulties by themselves. The problem is that both parents and children are changing.

Many parents don't realize that this is the source of conflict. There is a type of triple whammy that hits at this point of life. When our children are teenagers, we, ourselves, are hitting the mid-life crisis years, and our own parents are in their declining years.

The adolescent is asking, "Who am I?" The parents are asking "Is that all there is?" The experts say that parents are going through "middlescence," a time for looking back at what has been accomplished and ahead to what is left to be done.

A parent may have exaggerated reactions to the thing his teenager says or does, because the parent himself is having doubts about his own self-worth. So, my youthful friends, don't worry about an occasional outburst of temper from moms and dads. One bad day does not a bad parent make.

Further, although most parents wouldn't want to be teenagers again, they are upset about their own missed opportunities. They feel that with the wisdom they've gained, they would do a great job of being a teenager. They are probably right, but we must all learn from our own experiences, both the happy and the painful ones.

## Role Reversals and Gender Clashes

Parents, too, are human and vulnerable. Young people have more freedom than we ever had at our age to pursue their own interests. Teens are starting to appreciate some of the things that older people enjoy. Teens are interested in the world, taking on a whole new perspective about it.

And we adults are often pleasantly surprised how responsible, sensitive, and perceptive our teens can be toward worldly and eternal values. We hope that teens will always keep a tender conscience, as they are bombarded by the media with so much sex, crime, and drugs.

*If we give young people the freedom they long for, they may want to keep coming back.*

The permissive generation of the 1960's -- which was a very anti-authority, anti-establishment time -- has resulted in the crime, drugs, divorce, and AIDS problems of the 1990's. We adults do so appreciate our teens' tender hearts in trying to view TV programs and movies that are as wholesome as possible. It is just not normal for people's relationships to move as fast in real life as they do on TV, hopping in and out of bed as fast as fleas on a dog.

We parents shouldn't cling to our young people unnecessarily. Children who are desperate to get away

## Role Reversals and Gender Clashes

from their parents are sometimes the ones whom the parents are frantically holding on to. If we give young people the freedom they long for, they may want to keep coming back.

It's ideal when we have the best of both worlds -- an active, exciting life on our own and the option of sharing our parent's life as well. In everything, we try to guide our young people to be responsible individuals. We are compelled to teach them that, as a child, no one really "gets by" with anything here or in the hereafter.

Rather, every person -- dad, mom, brother, and sister -- is ultimately accountable to God who sees all actions. The child who feels an ultimate responsibility to God, in the context of a parent's responsible authority, is the least likely to rebel, or the most likely to recover from a period of rebellion.

And yes, it is frustrating to try to sort out good from bad. It's just that between the good and the bad are a lot of wise and respectively unwise actions. Wise actions usually lead to good results, and unwise actions often lead to bad results. That is what we've tried to teach our children -- it is part of our job description as parents.

I think it is a disservice to our young people to tell them that "this is the most carefree time of your life." It is not true; it's a wonder we don't send more of our young people over the edge with such thoughtless advice. They are going through a period of adolescence when their hormones won't stabilize, when

## Role Reversals and Gender Clashes

their extremities won't coordinate, and they find little comfort in our telling them that "it is going to get worse."

The fact is, that although the stresses and pressures continue to mount as the years and decades pass, our ability to cope with these pressures -- socially, mentally, financially, spiritually, etc. -- grows so much faster.

We have been losing our moral umbrella in this country. Freedom is not just the right to do as we please. "Freedom," as Peter Marshall, former Chaplain of the Senate, put it, "is the opportunity to please to do that which is right." Therefore, I try to remind young people to keep on striving for maturity (they hate that "M" word).

*Every person – dad, mom, brother, and sister – is ultimately accountable to God who sees all actions.*

Young people will often counter with, "But you can't define maturity!" Well, can you do a job without being supervised? Can you carry money without spending it? When you make a promise, do you try to keep it? Can you consistently get to where you're supposed to be and on time? When you get something out, do you try to put it away? Can you bear an injustice without trying to get even? That's maturity.

### 30. NOTHING TAKEN FOR GRANTED

Whenever and wherever I speak to audiences across the land, I encourage parents and grandparents to write that letter of remembrance and advice to their children at graduation. It is a tradition at Harding Academy. Leave them a legacy -- make them read it twice a year. Give them a quiz on it; if they don't get at least 70 percent correct, write them out of your will (only kidding)!

Seriously, I also apologize to young people on behalf of busy parents. We haven't always been there for our young people. It has frustrated them and us. We have had to work so hard to pave the way for a bright and promising future for the next generation. We owe them that. We would give our lives for our children. We are giving our lives for our children. And guess what they owe us? Just one thing -- their cheerful cooperation.

Parents should not be taken for granted. It is true that the Wright brothers invented the airplane, but it was Mr. and Mrs. Wright who invented Orville and Wilbur. I am always encouraging young people to take mom and dad in their arms and say, "Mom and dad I love you, and thank you for the start you have given me."

And if young people will promise to do that, I guarantee them that they will live long and prosper. If they refuse to do that, I tell them that they will be poor and miserable and all their babies will be born naked (of course they don't want that).

## Nothing Taken for Granted

As they start their working years, I remind young people that the world doesn't owe them a living; it owes them nothing -- it was here first. And sure, variety is the spice of life, but it is monotony that buys the groceries. And while we are on the subject, the grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence; the grass is greener where it has been watered. Our young people are certainly welcome to climb the fence. But let them take some water with them. Then, wherever they are, the grass will be green.

*What good is it to dedicate a career to making a name for oneself if our family doesn't know who we are?*

I tell young people about Rudyard Kipling who once said, "I had six honest serving men, they taught me all I knew, their names were where and what and when and why and how and who." Why do I tell young people this? We have always told them, "Be somebody, be somebody." Now they must get specific and ask some tough questions: who, what, where, when, why, how, etc.

There may also come a time in our careers that we would have enough confidence in ourselves and our achievements that we could honestly say that true happiness in our lives may be one less promotion, one less title, one less advancement, one less transfer. After all, what good is it to dedicate a career to making

## Nothing Taken for Granted

a name for ourself if our family doesn't know who we are?

Conversely, we need to nudge our young people toward the direction of developing good, marketable skills. If we are going to get involved in other people's lives to do good, it is going to take time and money. And we will have neither time nor money, if we don't have a marketable skill. We will be working at two jobs seven days a week, and we won't have the time and energy to do much good for anyone.

*If we are going to get involved in other people's lives to do good, it is going to take time and money.*

It was fascinating watching our children go through a metamorphosis and arriving at adulthood. Somehow, through that "no-man's land" we call the teen years, that caterpillar, which crawled awkwardly and slowly into the cocoon, emerged as a beautiful monarch butterfly.

So, what are the four hardest jobs in the world? (1) teenager; (2) parent of teenager; (3) teacher of teenager; and (4) employer of teenager. The challenges are extraordinary. The famous educator, Horace Mann, once allegedly described the ideal educational environment -- the student, and teacher seated at opposite ends of a log, conversing. Well, in

## Nothing Taken for Granted

truth, I have known some times when I would rather sit-on-the-student and talk-to-the-log!

Here is advice from a real authority:

Dear Abby: My mother is always on my back about something. It's "sit up straight, talk slower, turn down the TV, quit picking your face, and go do your homework!" What's a poor defenseless teenager supposed to do anyway? Signed Hassled.

What do you suppose Abby wrote back?

Dear Hassled: "Sit up straight, talk slower, turn down the TV, quit picking your face, and go do your homework."

Parents, teachers, advisors, counselors, administrators, friends, neighbors, dear hearts and gentle people everywhere who are reading this -- regarding your role -- if your candle should ever flicker, and you should ever question your role, remember this: There is no greater gift than to have God's children entrusted to YOU! God must love them very much, because somehow He gave them YOU. If He rewards YOU, far beyond your worth, by letting YOU be their teacher-mentor-benefactor, then who are YOU to question His wisdom?

## 31. TAKING INVENTORY AND PAYING DUES

When it comes to intergenerational bonding, I have only one thing against our younger generation, and it's this: I'm not a part of it anymore. But the results are in -- The top nonscholastic problems that schools report facing today? Drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, assault.

The biggest problems in the 1940's and 1950's? Talking, spitwads, chewing gum, making noise, running in the halls, cutting in line, not putting paper in wastebaskets, sticking pony tails in ink wells. What's a pony tail? What's an ink well? Well, let's just say that if the two are in proximity, there is a moral obligation for little boys to connect them.

Have you heard this question before? "Did you do your homework?" Students whose parents closely monitor their activities tend to get higher grades (a firm grasp on the obvious), according to the National Center for Education Statistics, which studied 58,000 high school students.

Some 88 percent of the "A" students indicated the highest degree of parental supervision. 81 percent of the "B" students reported their parents knew of their activities. 72 percent of the "C" students, and only 61 percent of the "D" students, said their parents monitored what they did closely. Surprise. Surprise.

That probably explains my undistinguished record in junior high and senior high school. See, my folks just tried to raise me on *Parent's Magazine*. They didn't read it. They just rolled it up and whacked me on the rear.

## Taking Inventory and Paying Dues

A teenager came to his mother, and said, "Mom, I feel I should be rewarded for all the things that I have done this semester." And he presented to his mother a list. And the list said:

For all my good grades -----	\$10.00
For being on time at school -----	7.00
For keeping my room clean -----	10.00
For taking extra care of my books -----	3.00
For not complaining about the lunches you fixed -----	5.00
For doing extra reading and getting home with the notes from school -----	<u>5.00</u>
TOTAL -----	\$40.00

His mom looked the list over, put her arm around him and said "For taking care of you since you were a noise at one end and a mess at the other, NO CHARGE. For sitting up at night when you were sick (and then going to work the next day), NO CHARGE. For helping you many times with your homework, NO CHARGE. For taking you to school and picking you up 2,000 times, nearly 200 times this year alone, plus ball games, fundraising events, cheerleading practice, band practice, outings, NO CHARGE. For the time and the tears you've caused throughout the years, NO CHARGE. For advice, knowledge, and some money for college, NO CHARGE."

The teenager, having learned the cost of real love, took his bill and marked it "PAID-IN-FULL." And Mom

## Taking Inventory and Paying Dues

said, "Son, all we owe each other is our love. See, we pay our debt to the past, by being responsible for the future."

Some years ago, United Technologies ran the following "PLEDGE" in the *Wall Street Journal*:

1. I now realize that the greatest power in the world is the power of knowledge.
2. I want to be smart. Dumb, misinformed people go through life missing so many rewards that could be theirs.
3. I will learn my basic skills and be expert in them.
4. I will read books on the subjects that interest me most. But I will also read books and articles on other subjects to broaden my awareness of what is happening in the world around me.
5. I will discuss at dinner time what I have learned or questioned at school today.
6. I will study the ideas and dreams of our history to see how they can help me today.
7. I will set aside some time each day to think about my future, to discuss it with people I respect, and to work on accumulating the knowledge that can guarantee that future.

## Taking Inventory and Paying Dues

8. I pledge this to those who love me and are trying to help me succeed. More important, I pledge it to myself.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher (I'll help you) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian  
(endorsed with great love) \_\_\_\_\_

All of this "paying dues" comes back to establishing priorities early in life. In the late 1950's, James Michener was invited to dinner by President Eisenhower. He declined in a letter saying he was going to a dinner to honor a former elementary school teacher. The President wrote in reply saying that Michener had made the better choice.

## 32. REINVENTING OURSELVES EVERY DAY

It seems as if I am always giving advice to young people; they really are America's greatest natural resource. I like to catch them at the threshold of their careers. Often, that time comes as I have the chance to speak at high school or college commencement exercises.

Commencement is a wonderful ceremony marking the beginning of a new life of "freedom" to support themselves. The students are seated there at graduation thinking, "Here I am world; I know my ABCs." And yet the world says, "Come on out here son or daughter, and we will teach you the rest of the alphabet."

I try to make it a point to remind our young people that if they don't plan, their next summer job could be for the rest of their lives. Indeed, their first order of business should be to develop a marketable skill. Then they can become independent and self-supporting.

Consequently, they will never have to ask mother, father, brother, sister, church, or government to take care of them (we'd all come to their rescue, if truly needed). You see, now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of themselves. This is practical economics.

No "onward and upward" from me; they know the direction. The world is not out there eagerly awaiting their talents; the world has gotten along just fine without them. All that our current graduates have is a one-year head start on next year's graduates. And this new crop

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must make the most of it, for a year from now there will be others after their job. It is so hard to convince young people of this old adage, "You don't get more until you do more than you get paid for."

There is a certain amount of fear of the unknown as our children grow up and graduate. There is always that concern and wonderment, "Is there life after graduation?" Very few people know the rules of life, and so they lay themselves open to pain. Time after time they spend most of life as spectators on the sideline just observing the game.

*Few people realize that after graduation the rules are different.*

Few people realize that after graduation the rules are different. We get out of school and go to work, and then it starts -- somebody else gets promoted. The questions start in our minds, "Why did he get promoted? I am a good worker, I have been here longer, etc." We then work harder in order to improve ourselves; then it occurs again.

Someone else gets promoted. And we react by exclaiming, "How come he got promoted -- he must be doing something immoral!" Probably not, most likely, he was doing things in addition to his work. And the danger is here that we can become workaholics,

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working harder and harder in order to prove ourselves to our boss.

And all the time we are wondering, "Why doesn't he notice me?" Well, he doesn't have X-ray vision, and he never will. The sad thing about the workaholic is that he becomes a person who has no balance in his life. A person who buries himself in his work every evening and at the same time comes to resent himself, his company, his community, and even his country.

What went wrong? It all goes back to elementary school. There, the teacher gave us an assignment; we turned it in and got a grade. We never showed undue interest in the teacher or the assignment. We didn't want to be branded an "apple-polisher," a "boot-licker," or a "Teacher's pet." That was the drill: We did the work, turned it in, and got a grade.

Every year we moved up because the other class had moved up. And there were plenty of empty chairs for us in the next class. We never stopped to talk to the principal, nor to invite him to sit at our lunch table. No, we didn't talk to him unless we had to. Then, he usually had a long talk and we had a long listen. But we advanced, and we thought it was that way after graduation.

Who are these people who advance in their careers, and what are they doing in addition to their work? These achievers learn to network, volunteer, lead, interact, join, go places, get organized, give more than they get, package the human capital worth, find a

## Reinventing Ourselves Every Day

mentor, and commit sometimes 20 percent of their time (that's some nights and weekends) to self-improvement.

Achievers know that 87 out of 100 people who fail in their careers do so, not because of a lack of technical skill, but because they rub other people the wrong way. So the achievers polish their people skills. If they can't learn names, they take that George Carnegie course. It helped me. Achievers tell others what they do well. Achievers honestly compliment others on what they are observed doing well.

*Achievers know that 87 out of 100 people who fail in their careers do so, not because of a lack of technical skill, but because they rub other people the wrong way.*

Achievers go up to the boss, who is the same authority figure as the school administrator, and say, "Boss, what are your goals and how can I help you achieve them?" He faints. You revive him and say it again, "Boss, how can I help you?" He replies, "You know, I have this problem I have been worried about."

And the achiever responds with, "Boss, why don't you let me worry about that problem with you?" By now, the boss has his arm around our achiever, and he is saying proudly, "My main man -- my main woman."

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The achievers advance, and everybody else just keeps on working.

Achievers know that successful people are successful because they make it a habit of doing things unsuccessful people won't do. And it's not immoral, it's just a matter of getting the work done, and then some -- no matter how tired we are, no matter how long the day. It's not a violation of our civil rights, and it's not a slur on our masculinity. If the work is there and we are there, we just get it done, and then some. We don't get more until we do more than we get paid for.



### 33. KEEPING THE WORK ETHIC IN PLACE

Work has been called the crabgrass in the lawn of life -- the fast food in the banquet of life. If jobs were really interesting, we would probably get picture postcards from people at work. I remember that as a teenager, my boss held a victory rally just to honor me for showing up at work that day.

In our working years, there are a number of ways to get to the top of a tall tree: (1) climb the tree; (2) sit on an acorn; or (3) make friends with a big bird. We can do all of these simultaneously. And yet, let us not confuse activity with results. The world doesn't care how many storms we have been through, but did we bring in the ship? We shouldn't describe our labor pains in great detail; show people the baby.

There is a big difference between being a workaholic and an optimal performer. It has been said that there will probably never be a documented case of the hard-driving workaholic who said on his deathbed, "Man, I wish I'd spent more time at the office."

However, the story is related that one summer evening, when Thomas Edison returned home from his work, his wife said, "You have worked long enough without a rest. You must go on a vacation." "But where will I go?" he asked. "Decide where you would rather be than anywhere else on earth, and go there," was the answer. "Very well," promised Mr. Edison, "I will go tomorrow." The next morning he returned to his laboratory.

## Keeping the Work Ethic in Place

I have always felt that the ideal vocation would be to pick something that we loved to do anyway as a hobby, if we were independently wealthy. Then, we can get really good at that and go out and find some organization that would be willing to pay us to do just that. Then, we would never really work another day in our life. That is, we wouldn't call it work at all.

I have always felt that the ideal vocation would be to pick something that we loved to do anyway as a hobby, if we were independently wealthy.

However, work is one of those four-letter words to many people. It has been said, "Success comes ahead of work, but only in the dictionary." He who would leave footprints in the sands of time must wear work shoes. It's not just that we should keep busy, we should also know why we are busy. The bee is praised; the mosquito is swatted. Abe Lincoln may have said, "All things come to he who waits," but what is probably more true is that "all things come to he who hustles while he waits."

Andrew Carnegie once put it this way: "If a man would eat, he must work. A life of elegant leisure is the life of an unworthy citizen. The republic does not owe him a living; it is he who owes the republic a life of usefulness. Such is the republican idea."

## Keeping the Work Ethic in Place

It was in 1625 when Sir Francis Bacon said, "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." Solomon used the ant as an object to teach us the urgency of work. And through it, we see that all nature is at work. Proverbs 6:6-11 says so:

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest -- and poverty will come on you like a bandit, and scarcity like an armed man.

There will be times in our school and work life that we can keep a disagreement from becoming an argument. We should welcome the disagreement; we should distrust our first instinctive impression. We should control our temper.

We should listen and look for areas of agreement. We should be honest and promise to think over and study carefully the other person's ideas. We should also thank the other person sincerely for his interest, and postpone action to give both of you time to think through the problem.

There will be times when we will have to handle conflict on the job. We can avoid conflict when the issue is a low priority or is just developing. We can accommodate the other person and the conflict when

## Keeping the Work Ethic in Place

we want to build a relationship rather than win an organizational battle.

We can compete in an emergency-like situation when we must act with speed and decisiveness. We can collaborate when our investment in the issue is high and we value the other person's viewpoint. We can also compromise when time to make a decision is running out, and collaboration and competition have failed.

*And when it comes to office politics, remember that there is no such thing as "the loyal opposition," as there would be in politics.*

And when it comes to office politics, remember that there is no such thing as "the loyal opposition," as there would be in politics. I have known a number of talented people in various places who were swept away because they thought they were "the loyal opposition." They were guilty of rank insubordination.

Sadly, to them who is right became more important than what is right. And I tried to tell them, "If you are gone, who will champion your cause?" Work within the system, work around the edges, build some influence, etc.

## **Keeping the Work Ethic in Place**

There are so many things that one can do to get along with people, the management experts say. We shouldn't say everything we think. And we should watch our body language; it may say more than we intend or want to say. Make few promises, but keep the ones we make if we want to be trusted. Learn to praise good work, no matter who did it -- including our enemies. Have empathy.

Make merry with those who rejoice; mourn with those who suffer. Keep an open mind. If we are the only one coming up with the right answers, something is wrong. Discuss; don't argue. Let our merits speak for themselves, but be ready to discuss them when asked. Don't talk about another's weakness unless necessary. Treat everybody with equal importance.



### 34. HERE'S TO MANY HAPPY RETURNS

Probably the biggest decisions for the young person have to do with love, courtship, and marriage. It sometimes happens when we are in sort of a teenage, emotional "no man's land." The juices are flowing, the hormones are at high tide, the circuits are overloaded; there will be times when we won't really know if we are in love or just so excited we can't see straight.

We will need to know if it is love or just infatuation. One is truly wise who knows the difference. Infatuation, the experts tell us, is usually based on one or two traits (usually including sex appeal), whereas love is based on many traits. Infatuation produces feelings of insecurity and wishful thinking, whereas love produces a sense of security. With infatuation, the person is in love with love, whereas in real love, the person is in love with the other person.

With infatuation the other person is thought of as a separate entity and employed for self-gratification; in real love there is an identity with the other person. With infatuation we suffer a loss of ambition, appetite, etc., whereas in love, we work to please the other person. The physical element is much more important with infatuation than when we are in love. Infatuation may change quickly, but love lasts.

In general, we become sure it is really love if it is developed over a period of time, rather than if it comes all of a sudden. Until it really is love, tested by time and all of the good consideration and advice I'm giving here,

## Here's to Many Happy Returns

try for long courtships. Then you will have a good chance of knowing if it is really, truly an abiding, lasting commitment.

Here are some things that the would-be husband owes to his bride-to-be -- and please realize that I would head the list with strong mutual religious convictions toward New Testament Christianity: He should be morally clean.

He should prove his worth for his wife by the treatment of womenfolk in general. At home and in his dating, he should be a man of good character, and he should be capable of providing for a wife and a family. He should have a good temperament and a genuine love for that lady.

Of course, it is a two-way street. Here are some things that the bride-to-be owes her groom-to-be: Again, I would head the list with the fact that she should have a stronger commitment to her Creator than she has to her husband -- that will solve nearly anything.

She should be good to her mother. How does she treat her mother? That will indicate how she will treat others, too. She should not be quarrelsome or nagging. She should be his equal and have tastes in common with him. She should be a burden-sharer and have a genuine love for him.

We shouldn't base the entire love, courtship, and marriage decision on sex. Sex is both grossly overrated and greatly underrated. Sex is overrated if we think it

## Here's to Many Happy Returns

will solve everything and make all of life seem terrific. If we think it will do all of that, then we are going to be disappointed. For one thing, the way we view it and the way our spouse views it are entirely different because of the difference in chemistry between men and women. For example, men want love and women want romance.

It is also underrated, and therefore seldom provides the couple with the conjugal bliss that it was intended by their Creator for them. But when it is approached in a very careful, considerate, patient, exciting, fulfilling way, then you've really got something.

*The greatest love story will remain a very private thing between a couple who are working together and praying together and toiling together.*

The greatest love story in the world may never be told in a movie or a play or a book. The greatest love story will remain a very private thing between a couple who are working together and praying together and toiling together. They are really and truly one in all things. And that is a very private thing. The greatest love story will probably never be told in public because it is a very private thing between two people totally committed to each other and committed to the guidance presented by their Creator for the life that men and women are to have while on this planet.

## Here's to Many Happy Returns

I really believe that the key element to one's love life is this: The quality of the courtship determines the quality of the marriage. Doesn't that have to be true? If the courtship is stormy and short and raunchy and filled with doubt and recrimination and lack of trust and is devoid of integrity and fidelity, isn't it logical that the marriage will result in the same thing?

But what if there is a great amount of courage and consideration and fidelity and trust and commitment in the courtship? Wouldn't that make a dandy and enduring marriage? Ben Franklin once said, "Marry the right person; you double your blessings, and you half your sorrows."

Of course, the opposite is true: Marry the wrong person, and you double your sorrows, and half your blessings. What a tremendous time saver it is to marry the right choice. Man, a 100 percent return on your investment!

## 35. FAMILY VALUES DO MATTER

Why, of all our myriad topics, should we now deal with the topic of "Family Values?" I suspect that it's programmed into this writer's subconscious. Forgive the personal example from an editorial by former Daily Citizen publisher David McClain; however, it proves the point:

Two years ago Don Diffine spoke to the Rotary Club, and his message was held together by a similar thought: When we look at our lives and all we attempt, it is really for family -- children, spouses and parents. The family motivates noble efforts. Don is right.

What better place is there in the whole wide world than the family where people can learn to live together! It has been said that family trees themselves are likely to produce inferior fruit unless they are dutifully pruned of extra growth and watchfully fertilized with the essence of Christian graces.

The traditional family has been buffeted by many challenges and changes since World War II. What are those so-called "family values," and how important are they? Consider this finding by Margaret Mead:

In the family, children learn to be people. The boy learns from his father how to be a man and from his mother how to care for women. The girl learns from her mother how to be a woman and a mother, and from her father what men are. No known society has found a

## Family Values Do Matter

permanent substitute for the family as a way of shaping whole human beings.

My Dad? He had no problem raising a large family (six kids). His secret? Every Sunday afternoon he insisted on an all-day family drive -- while he stayed home and watched the ballgame! Only kidding.

And just how can we help this new 13th generation born in America, the "Baby Busters," make it? It will take more than relying on dad's money and mom's charm. In his chapter "What Price Excellence?" best-selling author Tom Peters (In Search of Excellence) puts it this way:

We are frequently asked if it is possible to "have it all" -- a full and satisfying personal life and a full and satisfying, hard-working, professional one. Our answer is: No. The price of excellence is time, energy, attention and focus; at the very same time that energy, attention and focus could have gone toward enjoying your daughter's soccer game. Excellence is a high-cost item. As David Ogilvy observed in Confessions of an Advertising Man: "If you prefer to spend all your spare time growing roses or playing with your children, I like you better but do not complain that you are not being promoted fast enough."

Dear reader, especially dads, please find fulfillment by living up to your duties as a parent. When men abandon the upbringing of their children to their wives,

## Family Values Do Matter

a great loss is suffered by everyone, but perhaps most by themselves. Your children will need you and you will need your children. Your children will need to grow up with a male role model to teach them how to work and dress and speak and fit into the work-a-day world successfully.

Let strength distinguish everything you do. Your contribution as a parent should be strength as an influence on your children and on society. Be the best husband, dad, brother, son, wife, mom, sister, daughter you can be. Give them good memories.



## 36. BUILDING TIES THAT BIND

When we do settle down and marry, we will want to make our little corner of the world a better place by being a good parent and by passing on good values to our children. A working parent, who never forgets that his first responsibility is to pass on those values to the next generation and nurture and train his children -- a working parent who keeps that perspective can make it happen. Let me urge husbands that, if it is at all possible, try to keep your wife home until your children start school. That would be a great achievement these days, wouldn't it?

May I be so bold as to give some further advice? The divorce problem is so epidemic today because people often did not have the benefit of proper courtship to work out their problems. Consequently, they married in haste and had to repent at leisure. I am going to be very candid here: The time for divorce is before we get married.

Let me be more candid. Divorce is a fact of life in American society today. It doesn't seem that any family is spared by it anymore. There is so much deep emotional scarring that occurs with divorces. Today there are people who are divorced and love each other. There are also people who are married and hate each other. By 1990, step-parent families outnumbered biological families.

Oh, there are all sorts of scary statistics. Today, compared to 1970, four times as many people are living

## Building Ties That Bind

together without benefit of clergy. Today, 50 percent of married men and 25 percent of married women are unfaithful, according to recent national polls.

So many social, emotional, and medical problems could be solved and eliminated if we were people who abstained from having any premarital sex partners and who were totally committed to one partner for life in marriage. What we need is a nationally sponsored movement for good, clean, safe monogamy.

*To affair-proof our marriage, we must regularly choose to remain married.*

Never marry until you are sure you love each other. If we can't look that person in the eye and genuinely say, "I will never leave you," then we shouldn't get married. Love isn't a feeling; it is a decision based on commitment. "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loves the church" (Ephesians 5:28). And when we are married, we should try to be as considerate of each other as we were before we got married.

To affair-proof our marriage, we must regularly choose to remain married. We must regularly reaffirm our personal values, to have a firm grasp on what is important in life. We will have to choose daily a mutually enriching environment for our spouse and our self. If we consider our family worth preserving and enjoying, we'll have the power to choose to say "yes" to

## Building Ties That Bind

our spouses and “no” to an affair. Then, the person who marries us will be so lucky indeed.

Good family ties may lengthen to accommodate time and distance, schedules and situations, but they don't break. It is very difficult to make it, even under the best of circumstances. But I do know this: When we are all in the same lifeboat, tossed about on the stormy sea, we owe each other complete loyalty.

So, what we've always heard is still true: The best thing that a dad can do for his children is to love their mom. Believe me, that will solve and cure most of the family relationship problems today.



## SUMMARY: LEAVING THAT LEGACY

The following are further excerpts adapted from our kids' senior letters (references of a very personal nature are omitted). This was also taught as a topical series in a 10th Grade Bible Class for several years. Here are the capstone comments that rounded out my legacy to our new young people who had survived adolescence intact:

We believe that you are well on your way to becoming a well-adjusted, productive young adult. We haven't scrimped on our love for you because we know that it fosters a sense of security, belonging and support. We've taught you right from wrong, discussed our own moral values, and tried to live up to them, setting an example of courage and integrity.

We have insisted that you treat others with respect and kindness. We have tried to discipline constructively and tried to be clear about standards of behavior, explaining reasons behind the rules. We have tried to listen and give you our attention, and to also understand your viewpoint.

We have tried to foster independence by slowly giving you more freedom to make your own small decisions first and then more important ones later. Although it has been very difficult, we have tried to spend time together, having some working-vacation trips together as a family, too.

## Summary: Leaving that Legacy

You can glean a lot from the Bible, if you will take the time to see what it has to say about your role as a citizen, employee, spouse, partner, and parent. Adversity can make you a better person. That has certainly been true in my life. Always remember that it is better to be hassled than to be ignored. If you are hassled, it means that we care.

*Remember that spaceship earth came with a manual of instructions.*

Do try to keep things in perspective, specifically a Christian perspective. Our youth today have been mentally programmed by secular influences. By the time our youth graduate from high school, if they are average, they have watched 15,000 hours of television.

At the same time the senior graduates from high school, he will have probably attended, at the most, Bible study and church less than 2,400 hours since kindergarten. On the average, dads during these 12 years have devoted only 312 hours by training their youth through personal attention. That's the national average, sadly.

We parents apologize for not always being there. We know that if we weren't there, then

## Summary: Leaving that Legacy

your parents missed it. We have had to work so hard and so long to establish our careers, and to pave the way for a bright and promising future for you (and to pay all that tuition, too).

As the recently popular song goes, "Everything I do is because of you -- that's my job, you see." We know it has been frustrating for all of us, but here is how Mom and I are going to make it up to you, if you can wait another half dozen years or so: We are going to be terrific grandparents (that day has since come in all its glory).

We are so pleased that you have chosen to further your education at what we believe to be a great Christian University. God can bestow no greater compliment upon us than to place His book in our hands and call us Christian educators. You are about to secure a college education on a campus where God is honored--where the principles of the Bible are taught as the principles of life. You will get the biblical faith in the science laboratory, in the history class, and the economics course.

Please know that the successful pursuit of a professional career is inherently consistent with the righteous life, as long as you live by the Golden Rule and New Testament Christianity. Close adherence to Biblical precepts enhances, not hinders, the probability of professional success.

## Summary: Leaving that Legacy

And if you ever feel like rationalizing your behavior by saying that you are only human, please remember that we are made in the very image of God. We live and move and have our very being because of God. We are the only beings who can think the thoughts of God, and we are the only ones who will survive this planet.

*Enjoy life, and never break with God. You will be successful, and go to heaven forevermore.*

By being "only human" you have been given dominion over the earth, you are the greatest of God's creatures -- the object of His love. So, as Solomon said, enjoy life, but never, never break with God. Always develop a quick conscience and decide ahead of time how you will handle temptation.

You develop an indomitable spirit that you can do anything. That is the theme of the book of Ecclesiastes: Enjoy life, and never break with God. You will be successful, and go to heaven forevermore. Always remember that your only purpose for being here on earth is to determine where you will spend eternity. View every day, every effort, every activity, every dream, every aspiration in the context of

## **Summary: Leaving that Legacy**

Christian living -- so that every facet of your life is knit together in a harmonious, consistent system of values.

Develop a set of convictions that will guide you through any situation or temptation. Hold the line on spirituality, and live a clear margin between right and wrong. Judge everything as written, said, and done -- judge it all by the Book of books.

And when you do move away from home, don't leave your religion behind when you enter the not-so-loveable world that is so desperately in need of the good news that you have. You were created to love God. And if you don't, nothing can fill that hollow, emptiness inside. Nothing. So, be partners with God in all that you do.

Never forget that integrity is in very short supply and very great demand. It is a seller's market out there. Remember that the best thing in life is to be a Christian. There is nothing quite like it. It is better than anything else. Try to accept your brethren, your classmates, as you'll someday accept your mate for life -- not only because of, but in spite of. Continue to develop your identity with the Restoration Movement.

Remember that at a Christian university, you can continue to develop an identity that is worth having and keeping. It is even a nice

## Summary: Leaving that Legacy

place to have problems. Truly, you have completed the first quarter of the human race. And at this point you are ahead. It is an awfully long trip through eternity; continue to make it as sure as you can.

Finally, dear reader, it has been said that youth is young life plus curiosity minus understanding. But it is not just a time of life -- it is also a state of mind. It is, as the various sages have described it, "a temper of the will... a quality of the imagination ... a vigor of the emotions ... a predominance of courage over timidity ... of the appetite for adventure over love of ease."

All in all, we parents are so thankful for the exuberance and confidence that comes from being a young person today. Without it, our young people would probably droop and perish away at the frightful prospect of, yes, someday being as dumb as their parents.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND AFTERTHOUGHTS

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The author would welcome knowing about any possible omissions or errors. The author has also sought to locate and secure permission for the inclusion of copyright material in this book. If any such

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Out of consideration for the faint of heart among us, I have chosen not to include any disturbing narrative about the physical operation of abortion itself. Others are more qualified or better equipped to provide those stark details. Above all, care must also be taken to evaluate every teaching or position in the light of Scripture, which is ultimate authority for our beliefs and practices.

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## ORGANIZATIONS

American Life League, Box 490, Safford, VA 22554,  
(703) 659-4171.

Americans United for Life, 230 North Michigan Ave.,  
Suite 915, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 263-50.

American Victims of Abortion, 4177 7th St. NW, Suite  
402, Washington, D.C. 20004.

Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation, St. Davids, PA.

Baptist Children's Home, 354 West St., Valparaiso, IN  
46373.

Bethany Christian Services, 901 Eastern Ave. NE,  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

Children's Homes of Paragould, James Balcom,  
Director, 505 S. 2nd Ave., Paragould, AR 72450.

Christian Action Council, 701 West Broad St. #405,  
Falls Church, VA 22046, (703) 237-2100.

The Christian Action Council, 422 C. St. N.E.,  
Washington, D.C. 20002.

Christian Homes of Abilene, Nancy Miller, President,  
242 Beach Street, Abilene, TX 79601, P.O. Box  
270, Abilene, TX 79604, (915) 677-2205.

Eagle Forum, 7800 Bonhomme, St. Louis, MO 63105  
(314) 721-1213.

## Organizations

The Edna Gladney Home, 2300 Hemphill, Ft. Worth, TX 76110, (817) 922-6000).

Focus on the Family, Family Researcy Council, Colorado Springs, CO 80995.

Heritage House '76, Inc., "The Precious Feet People", Box 730, Taylor, AZ 85939.

The Human Life Foundation, 150 East 35th St., New York, NY 10016.

Liberty Godparent Ministry, P.O. Box 27000, Lynchburg, VA 24506, (804) 847-6806.

The Light House, 1409 E. Meyer Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64131.

March for Life, P.O. Box 618, Washington, D.C. 20013, (202) LIFE-377.

Mercy Ministries, P.O. Box 150829, Nashville, TN 37215.

National Adoption Center, Gloria Hochman, Director of Communications, 1500 Walnut St., Suite 701, Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 735-9988.

National Council for Adoption, 1930 17th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 328-1200.

## **Organizations**

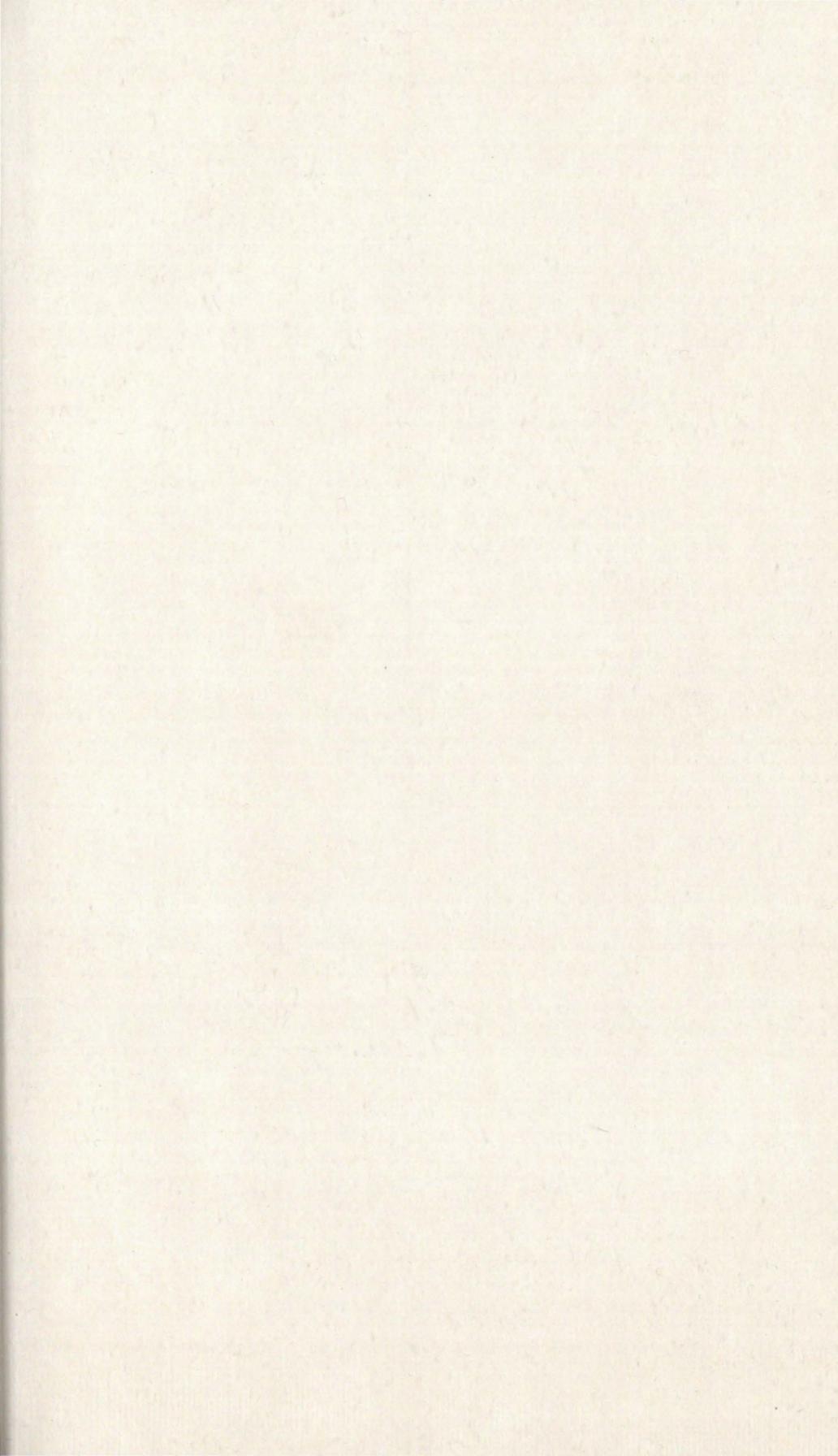
National Right to Life Committee, 419 Seventh St., NW  
Suite 402, Washington, DC 20004, (202) 626-  
8800.

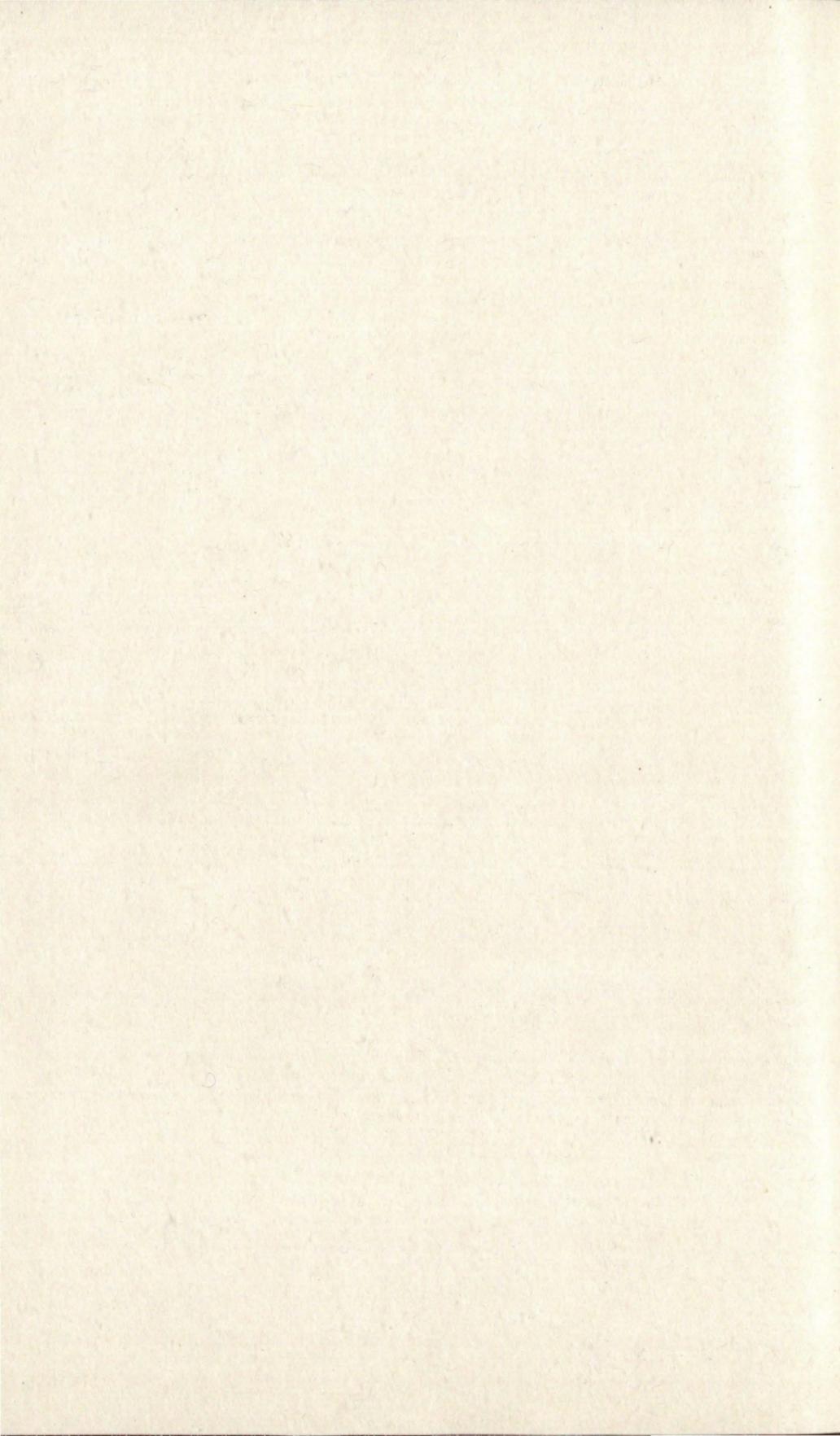
Post Adoption Center, Director Joanne Slate, LPC,  
(512) 225-5151.

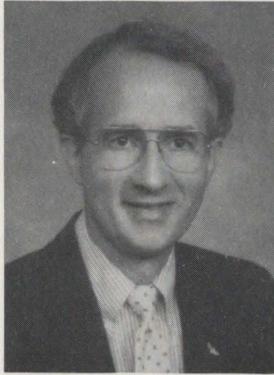
Pro-Family Forum, P.O. Box 8907, Ft. Worth, TX  
76112, (817) 531-3605.

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The recipient of the \$7,500 Freedoms Foundation Principle Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education, Dr. Diffine has received 16 additional Freedoms Foundation awards in the categories of Non-profit Publications, Economic Education, Public Affairs-Advertising, Public Address, and Published Works. He is the faculty winner of a \$1,000 First Place prize in a national essay contest judged by Nobel Economist Milton Friedman.

In 1995, he received the "Champion of Enterprise" award and became the first inductee into the National Students In Free Enterprise Hall of Fame in Kansas City. The First Annual Distinguished Scholar Award was also presented in 1988 to Dr. Diffine in Cleveland, Ohio, by the Association of Private Enterprise Education. Dr. Diffine has provided Congressional testimony on business problems, economic impact statements, and inflation-recession dilemmas.

Dr. Diffine is married to the former Dion Hillman of Kailua, Hawaii. Dion is a math teacher in the Searcy public schools. The Diffines have two children: David, 25, who is a fourth year medical student; and Danielle, 23, who is an accountant.

*I was born to a woman I never knew, and raised by another who took in orphans. I do not know my background, my lineage, my biological or cultural heritage. But when I meet someone new, I treat them with respect. For after all, they could be my people."*

-- James Michener

Author and novelist James Michener is indeed a member of a prestigious and talented club of famous adoptees. Each was born with a free will to do good and/or evil:

1996 Olympic Decathlon Gold Medal Winner Dan O'Brien ... founder of Wendy's International Dave Thomas ... former President Gerald Ford ... founder of Apple Computers Steve Jobs ... pioneer bird watcher John J. Audubon ... actor Richard Burton ... Olympic figure skaters Peter and Kitty Carruthers ... newscaster Faith Daniels ... actor Ted Danson ... professional football player Eric Dickerson ... actor Hugh O'Conner ... Olympic ice skater Scott Hamilton ... Olympic diver Greg Louganis ... professional baseball player Jim Palmer ... former First Lady Nancy Reagan ... former President Reagan's son Michael Reagan ... playwright Edward Albee ... serial killer David Berkowitz ... senator Robert Byrd ... Admiral Farragut ... rock singer Deborah Harry ... television program host and author Art Linkletter ... actor James McArthur ... the patriarch Moses ... Karen Ann Quinlan ... first recorded adoptee King Sargon of Mesopotamia ... explorer Henry Morton Stanley ... Congressman Jim Lightfoot ... actress Melissa Gilbert ... orchestra leader Les Brown ... author Edgar Allan Poe

One has to wonder in amazement at the terrible loss to our human family of another 30 million babies who, since 1973, were denied their human potential to make the above mentioned list. What could they have become: Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief? We will never, never know.

This book deals with two profound questions: First, "what can we do, in the name of Godly charity and true religion, to keep on providing help, assistance, support, love, care and nurturing for birthmothers? And second, "what can we also do to keep finding ways, in these complex legal times, that such children can continue to fill the aching voids in the hearts of other childless couples?"

As special kids and special parents seemed to be destined to get together, this book concludes with advice to all of us who would "raise them right" and thereby be true friends of the family.