

No Greater Joy

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The Church At Cane Creek, 1000 Pearl Rd., Pleasantville, TN 37033

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Ramblin'

A young father dropped by to confer with one of my sons on some item of business. His little boy, not yet two years old, wandered over to the toy box and began to drag out all manner of interesting animals and colorful, noise-making contraptions. The men held our attention as they discussed several interesting items—everyone ignoring the kid. With business concluded, the father said to his son, "Come on, let's go." I am always observing the interaction of parents and their children, so I watched to see how quickly the little fellow would give up his intoxication with his captivating pile of distraction. It was obvious he had heard. But rather than drop the toys and come running, which is what you would expect from an obedient, well-trained child, he started grabbing toys as if he intended to prevent anyone from separating him from them. This young father and his wife have done a good job with their first child, and I was hoping for a good showing with this one as well.

I got much more than I hoped for. The wobbly toddler, with his arms full of toys, crossed the room to unburden himself at the toy box. He hastily made several trips until he had completely restored the room to its original order, and then came to his daddy's side. I couldn't believe it. I quickly ushered them out of the

house before my wife took notice. What if she considered the fact that this tiny tot was better trained than her husband? I know it is never too late to train, but it does get too late to want to be trained.

The most successful teaching is done before one year old. If you stake the plant when it is young, you won't end up trying to tie up a crooked plant—something I do most every year. As I have said before, "If a child is capable of taking toys out of a box, he is capable of putting them back in." Children are able to do much more much earlier than parents suppose.

Most training is actually untraining. That is, parents wait until a child is conditioned to inappropriate behavior before they commence training, and then they are trying to break bad habits, not form or mold developing habits.

In our selfish, carnal state, we parents tend to be motivated by internal pressure more than wisdom—the pressure of feelings, frustrations, guilt, anger at being ignored, embarrassment, etc. We follow the path of least resistance. We tolerate more than we should until emotional pressure motivates us to action. The problem is that at that point our response is a negative one. It is criticism and irritation. The child understands it is the parents' ego in competition with his for supremacy. I know the child can't put a name to it, but his little soul

will respond to emotional control and manipulation just as would your spouse. An irritated parent comes across as a bully, like an incompatible roommate, rather than a dignified authority that is training for the child's good.

All early training is done by participation and repetition, not by precept. You cannot lecture a one- or two-year-old on his duty. Threats and spankings will not mold habits. But if, right from the start, you never allow a child to leave his toys or clothes scattered, you will never have a hassle. Do not force the one-year-old child to work for you. Don't put pressure on children that young. You need to apply pressure if he is angry and throwing a fit, or stubbornly rebelling, but you don't pressure a child for being untrained. It's your fault.

So you shouldn't spank him for failure to put his toys up. Sit with him on the floor and make a game out of cleaning up. The first few times it is not necessary that he do any significant portion of the work. You just want to communicate the idea that toys are never left scattered. Show him how to return toys to the box, laugh, sing, and play. You may put away ten toys while he cleans up only one. You may have to hold his hand and guide it. He will think it is the grandest thing in the world to be playing with mother. If you make cleanup delightful, he will dump the toys out and then pick them up

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several times during the course of play.

Heed this warning: If you try to train in a confrontational attitude, the child will emotionally draw back from you and from the experience of cleanup. He will come to associate cleanup with tension and anxiety. You will not only fail to teach him to clean up after himself, you will teach him to avoid clean up, and you will teach him to be tense and demanding of you. You would expect that a child living under a significant amount of parental tension and pressure would draw away from the parent, but the response is one of whining, demanding, clinging, and a generally dissatisfied state of mind. He will demandingly snuggle up with a frown on his face. He will forcibly push away things that you offer him, because his soul is dissatisfied and angry. He wants and needs unconditional affection given in the security of authority. What he has gotten is arbitrary rule with conditional affection given in an atmosphere of criticism and rejection—a sure formula for shipwreck.

As I was writing this I was interrupted by a child screaming. Deb is baby-sitting an eleven-month-old little boy. I let him scream for about five minutes, as I wrote the last lines of the above paragraph, and then I left my office and went to investigate. Deb was doing business on the phone—talking to a missionary, long distance. The child was clawing at the back door, trying to get it open so he could go outside. I picked up a switch and walked over to where he was conducting his scream-in. In a calm but firm voice I said, “No, stop crying.” I didn’t expect him to respond, but I wanted to establish the rules. When he failed to respond, I switched him twice on the only exposed skin—about three inches between his sock and pants leg. Again he did what I

expected, what he does when his mother swats him—scream in defiance. But I have seen her swat him, and it never even gets his attention, other than a signal to scream louder. But when I switched his bare skin, he looked shocked and started to rub it. He continued to cry in protest, so I gave him two more licks on the bare leg. This time, he was convinced that I meant business. I know that he understood the issue, because he crawled past me, away from the door. Again I commanded him to stop crying, brandishing the switch. He stopped crying immediately, continuing to rub his leg while staring at me.

At this point, you could say that I had won. I had trained him to respond to my command and to cease his crying protest. But that is only the negative side of training. I like to stop with the positive, so I picked up one of the toys and started talking about it and trying to get his attention to something creative. The rule is **“When you take something away from a child, always replace it with something positive.”** I don’t mean that you should purchase compliance with a bartered settlement. You do not want to give the child an indulgence to satisfy him. Just don’t leave him sitting in a boring vacuum. Turn him to something stimulating and creative. I didn’t want to leave him sitting on the floor, rubbing his sore leg and brooding over his defeat. If I did that, he would soon return to his demand, for he had his heart set on going outside. After failing to gain his interest in the toys, I rolled a ball over to him. He shoved it away violently. It was a symbolic rejection of me and my attempt to distract him. At this point I might have spanked him for his little show of defiance and self-will, but I did not want to get caught in a downward attitude spiral. He needed to be drawn into something positive, so I

overlooked that little display in hopes of turning his attitude around. I could have over-ridden his temper and crushed his rebellion, but I wanted a friend, not just an obedient servant.

Sitting near by was a five-gallon plastic water container, one third full of coins—our life savings—our insurance policy—our hospitalization—our retirement—former math curriculum—and now kiddy entertainment. Earlier he had reached down inside, as only his little hand could do, and drawn out some coins which were now scattered on the floor. I pretended to ignore him and commenced to pick up coins, making as much jingling sound as possible, and dropping them one by one back into the container. It was more than he could stand. I had noticed that he was a manipulator. He rushed over to where I was and reached deep into the jar, coming out with a hand full of coins. He handed them to me smiling. I took them and again dropped them back into the jar one by one. He drew out more and dropped a few on the floor, threw some across the room laughing, and handed me some. His attitude had recovered. He was happy. He was playing. He was no longer trying to get out the back door. I had not only won the contest of wills, I was winning his soul to myself. I was tying the strings of fellowship. This camaraderie would make it harder for him to disobey. He was coming to value my friendship. He would now want to please me.

But there was more. Now that I had him on most pleasant terms, I would teach him responsibility. I would teach him to clean up after himself, to put the coins back into the container. So I picked up the coins from the floor and held them over the hole, dropping them slowly so he could see what I was doing. I made it look and sound fun. After a moment, he touched the coin in my hand just

as it slipped away into the jar. I then bragged on how smart he was to put the coins back in the container. Again I manipulated him into assisting me in returning the coins. He got the idea and retrieved a coin from the floor to return it to the jar. As he dropped the coin in the jar, he looked up for my approval, giving me a big smile. I bragged on his maturity and hard work and dropped more coins in the jar. He was convinced; putting them back in the jar was as fun as taking them out. All this occurred to the background sound of my commands accompanying his actions. When he dropped a coin in the jar, I would say, "Put the coins in the jar." He came to identify my pleasant command with the pleasure of putting the coins back in the jar. He will now repeat the cleanup experience just to relive the pleasure of camaraderie. And he also learned the meaning of the command, "Put the coins back in the jar."

This took about ten minutes of my time. You say, "I don't have that much time." Then give your children to someone who does. Obviously you have chosen to dedicate you time to some pursuit you deem more valuable than well-trained children. You shouldn't be a parent if you are not going to give it all that these little developing souls deserve. The world has enough misfits without Christians adding to the mob. There is no greater joy than training up godly, emotionally stable, hard working,

and ministering children.

You are too busy? Amish mothers make their own soap, carry water in buckets, build a fire outdoors under a big cast iron pot, boil the clothes for thirteen kids and a grimy husband, hoe the garden, preserve the vegetables, kill and clean the chicken, milk the cows and churn the butter, split the fire wood, and then do all the house cleaning chores that you do, and they have time. But then they don't have telephones or TVs, and when visitors come over they don't stop work to visit. The visitor helps with the work.

Did I forget to mention: The Amish mother trains her children to work! She is not their servant. She is the TRAINING BOSS. You can be too. It will take a load off your mind and body while building character and self-confidence in your children. ☺

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Dear Michael and Debi Pearl,

I praise God for your ministry! The Lord has blessed us with 5 children in our seven years of marriage. Our oldest child is 6 years old. "To Train Up A Child" has literally transformed our home from chaos to harmony and has changed me and my children completely. Where I used to wake up discouraged, overwhelmed and often times depressed, I am now able to approach my days with confidence and strength and a smile. Where my children used to be insecure and disobedient, they are now confident and obedient. I am so refreshed by your straight-up talk of the responsibility of parents to change and address the sin in their lives, thus being able to love and train their children with a godly perspective (rather than selfish). There has always been something between me and my oldest son I couldn't put my finger on - the section on "tying strings" was my answer. I am so thankful to be enjoying my precious children instead of merely trying to "keep up" with my life. Thank you again and again for sharing the wisdom and vision God has given you in child rearing.

Sincerely, A.C.

Dear Mr. Pearl,
Please send your newsletter to [us]. My son and his wife are using your materials in training up their children. We are very impressed with the changes we see in their family and would like to be able to reinforce their training and be supportive of them. We believe your newsletter will encourage us in this area, and help us to encourage our other children and grandchildren as well.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. L L

Dear Mr. Pearl,

Hello! My name is David Poland. My mom, sister, brother, and me went to your big long talk here in Virginia. You asked me what I was doing for a living. I said playing. You inspired me to work. Now I am shoveling snow and have made \$45 in two days.

Sincerely, David Poland
P.S. here is a buck for missions

Dear Pearls,

A lady started coming to our church with a two year old girl. She had to leave every service because she would scream so bad. She had left her husband and I had no liberty to say anything to her. After one month she came up and asked me how did I get my kids to sit so still and quiet during church. I said, "I read a book." She borrowed it, and within two weeks, she was staying in church services. Then I gave her the women's tape you have. She went back to her husband.

A pastor we used to be under used to tell us, "I guess it's good to tell your kids they did good once in a while." He was so afraid of "building up the flesh." He now has troubled teenage boys. He read your books, hung his head and cried. He apologized to his wife and boys, but so much damage has been done.

God has opened my eyes to so many things since reading your books and listening to your tapes, as I know He has others. Praise God for your ministry. I only wish I had these books 12 years ago when I had my 1st child.

Love in Christ, S

Dear Debi,

About 4 weeks ago, you and Mike held a seminar in Concord, NC. What a ministry to my husband's heart as well as my own! Afterwards a group of us ladies asked many questions and kept you till "the last dog was dead." Mine was the last question and I felt almost rude as I pushed it at you-but you know how desperate I was. The question had to do with a defiant 4 year old who refused correction altogether and you replied that it sounded as if he was one of those kids who may one day use a hammer on me.

Debi, thank you for telling me straight. You told me to confront every little hint of disobedience with a totally carefree smile and reward of pain. It was so simple.

I went home and did as you said...he ran from me and locked himself in the bathroom. When he came out, we picked up where we left off. Three swats for the offense and 5 swats for running away. The inevitability of the spanking—not the force—is truly what made the difference. In a matter of 3 days this child became a believer—MOM and DAD were in charge. He still runs on occasion, but his heart is quickly turned to repentance and love to us. Actually, I anticipated WWIII with him in order to win and all kinds of unpleasant things.

How I thank you for your ministry to families and hurting people. There are so many of us who are desperate for Biblical answers and are finding the answers by the way of faithful ministers in Pleasantville, TN.

The name of Christ is glorified when parents become what He wants them to be.

Your Sister in Christ,
S.

Dear Pearls,

I just had to write again and tell you what a blessing last month's newsletter was. The day after I got it, I was sitting in my schoolroom grading papers. I always grade papers in the evenings or on weekends because my kids don't get through till 3:00 or 4:00 PM. We start at 8:00 AM. It's not that I give them so much work, it's that they waste a lot of time. I always thought that if they want to spend the day in the schoolroom, let them; it doesn't affect me. I was wrong (Again!). I was tired of having to be in there on weekends and evenings while my husband was home. In the middle of grading papers, I stopped and picked up your newsletter and started reading "Preventive Training." Although I didn't know it at first, I realized God was using it to show me, (1) that I had a problem, and (2) the answer. That night I made up a schedule. I called my kids into the room and told them the new rules. They looked at me like I was so mean. The next day, we finished school at 12:00. They ate lunch and went outside for the rest of the day. I asked them that afternoon, "How do you like our new rules?" They all said, "Yea! We like 'em." My 12-year-old said, "At first I thought, 'Man, Mama isn't going to be any fun any more,' but this is great!"

God also showed me that before, when they finally got their work done, I would have to make them go outside. They had been so idle all day, they didn't even want to play. Now they stay busy all the time. I also see that I needed to do this to discipline them not to be lazy, to go ahead and get the job done. Now all my papers are graded and school is out of the way when my husband comes home. If that newsletter was for no one else, it was for me.

*God bless you,
S.*

Low self-esteem?

Dear Pearls,

I have a problem that maybe you could answer. We have two boys, ages 11 and 13. I have made some wrong choices with the thirteen-year-old. He has a very low self-esteem. I want to change my ways with him, if possible. My problem is this: I gave him instructions not to wear his old shoes any more, for they were not good for his feet. But he slipped them on anyway. He would have gotten away with it if it weren't for the younger brother saying, "You're not supposed to wear them." I was in the next room and heard the remark. I went in and scolded my older son for his disobedience. Am I making his self-esteem worse by scolding him when the younger reinforces my command? I find this situation happening a lot. Is the younger at fault also? Could you give me advice on this situation? My older boy with the low self-esteem is the source of the problem, and I feel I have caused it. When he was young we decided to homeschool. I started him in a preschool program at age five. I tried to teach him to read from about age 6 up. He did not do well and I was always frustrated and angry with him. Sometimes I would lash out at him with my hand. I now know how very wrong I was, and I am sorry I started him so early and sorry I responded as I did. Now he has no desire for school. My relationship with him is not the greatest. He has a love for flowers, and I am trying to tie strings with him in that area. My younger son always seems to "out do" him in obedience and schoolwork. I need help and advice if possible.

Love in Christ, A Mother

problem is not that you started schooling too early. It is that you applied pressure too early. No, not just too early; you applied pressure that no one should ever be subjected to unless he is in the Marines. The first six or seven years of a child's life is a time of emotional development. It is not a time to feel the responsibilities of academia. The whole idea of homeschooling is to keep children in a nurturing atmosphere—to give them specialized one-on-one care. However, if the one giving the special attention is especially critical, the results are especially destructive. Since a homeschool child is usually confined to just one teacher, and that teacher controls and sets the mood of the limited social world in which the child circulates, the potential for harm is as great as the potential for good.

The problem is not early teaching. Many children are taught to read by four or five, with no emotional damage—quite the opposite. Only one of our kids could read by five. One of our boys didn't even start until he was almost nine. If children are encouraged to participate in the fun of learning, it is never too early. But if you can't make it fun, they will never enjoy learning at any age. If you bring conflict, tension, and criticism into homeschooling, you have a certain formula for failure. And not just failure in schooling, but failure in personal development. The younger the child and the more sensitive his nature, the greater the potential for damage.

You honestly described your former attitude and actions by saying, "I was always frustrated and angry with him. Sometimes I would lash out at him with my hand." That's an ugly picture you paint of yourself. And you are not alone, it is all too common. Your letter suggests the rationalization made by all angry people—that you were caused to be

Michael Pearl answers

You have confessed that you erred in demanding too much of your son too early, and now that the damage is obvious you would like to undo the harm. Your conclusion is that your son now thinks of himself as inferior. The example you gave concerning the worn out shoes—hardly significant in itself—is no doubt just representative of many similar conflicts.

You have been brave and honest in seeing your error, and you are humble enough to seek a solution. It is quite apparent that you love your children and are willing to change

yourself to help them. You are half way there. Now that is the last positive thing I will say for a few paragraphs, so bite down and hold on; this is going to hurt just a little—maybe a lot. I address this not only to you but to the thousands of other mothers who are right where you are.

To be sure, your son's condition is serious, but it is readily mendable. The big problem is not the mechanics of your son's condition; it is the state of your own mind and heart. If God could work a change in your heart—not just you, but the entire family—your son would be healed in a matter of days.

You said you "made some wrong choices" by starting too early. The

angry. But angry people would not be less angry if the provocation was removed. Pressure blows out the weakest point, but the weak point is not the cause of the pressure. Your son's poor showing in academics did not cause you to be angry. You know you are angry at other times and to other people. Dear Mother, you have personal problems that cause you to fail with your children. I have learned this from thousands of letters, conversations, and e-mails from other mothers just like you. I have the benefit of the mistakes and successes of so many.

Without any claim as a psychic, I will tell you one more thing about yourself. You have a poor relationship to your husband. You do not enjoy him, and you do not allow him to enjoy you. When your other children get older, you will discover problems with them as well—not necessarily a poor self-image, but there will be difficulties in relationships.

You went on to say that even now your "relationship with him is not the greatest." That's a clear statement that the cause of his condition is not just in the past. Your poor attitude toward him is ongoing. Children are great psychologists. They can feel our pleasure or our criticism. They respond quickly to the signals our souls emit. We cannot hide our feelings. They are revealed in the eyes of our children—eyes that dance with delight and confidence or eyes that droop with self-denigration.

You see the disease in your son and would take steps to cure it. But a family is similar to an organism. It is an indivisible whole. The individual members of a family are integrated like the root, trunk, branches, leaves, and fruit of a plant. You cannot just fix the part that is most bothersome—in your case it is the thirteen-year-old. You must fix the root. Mother and father are the roots of the family tree. In a healthy plant, mother is grafted into father; mother bears the children; and the children

reflect the health of the entire plant. You cannot treat diseased fruit without treating the root, trunk, and branches.

I know I am making you feel miserable, maybe worthless. It's part of the cure. Early child training is mostly just principles and techniques of training, but when a child passes ten or eleven, it is more soul-training-soul than "smart adult with technique training gullible kid." So I say to you, dear lady, you need to repent—to accept all the blame. You need to discover Christ's forgiveness for your own secret guilt. You need to fear God and love him. And then you must fall in love with your husband; surrender your life to being his helper and lover. With that, your anger will disappear and your son's problems will go away like the night's darkness.

Now, as to some practical suggestions. You are inclined to think that, due to your son's feelings of failure, possibly you should not hold him to the same standards you would another child. You are thinking, "Won't that just make him feel more inferior if I rebuke him?" But then you question your inclination to lighten up on him. You wonder if you should demand less of this broken child. You must understand that placing a child under obligation to observe boundaries and obey rules will not damage his self-esteem. If the child is already damaged, he nonetheless needs discipline and authority. To allow your guilt to induce you to be lenient on a child that has low self-esteem will only heighten his poor self-image by allowing him to act in ways that not only displease you but also violate his own conscience. His conscience makes demands upon him. He has an internal judge accusing him of any failure. You cannot rid a child of the voice of conscience through "positive affirmation."

If he violates the rules and perceives by your reserved response

that you view him as broken, he will do two things. First, he will think of himself as broken and despise himself even more. Second, he will do what any kid does; he will take advantage of your "compassion" by acting the role of victim. He will learn to use your caution and leniency as an avenue to get away with his self-will. You will experience increasing frustration over behavior you excuse on the one hand and condemn on the other, thus provoking you to further anger.

God's unwritten law prevails in your son's heart as it does in the hearts of all sons of Adam. Whether your son is emotionally stable and average in every way, or whether he is psychologically wounded, be assured he is still a person of flesh. As a member of the human race he tends towards laziness, rebellion, stubbornness, self-will, manipulation, dominance, pride, and one hundred other bad words. Here is my caution and warning. Do not make him more crippled with your guilt and self-pity. He must be brought to the rule of law as any child. His soul needs the release that comes from surrender to a higher power. You would have greatly improved his self-image if, when you caught him disobeying, you would have spanked him firmly rather than rebuke him. Although, I must say, a thirteen-year-old boy may be too old for a mother to spank.

The original problem is still there, for, speaking of the present, you said, "My relationship with him is not the greatest." What happened at five and six has no bearing on your present relationship to your son. It is the present that muddles the present. Children just need three days to one week of smiles and understanding to respond in kind. Your son is not broken. He is starved. If you feed him rightly, he will grow.

You said that you were trying to establish a relationship with him by sharing his interest in flowers. That is a good idea. But I want to caution you; if you get involved with him in

(Continued on page 8)

Dear Pearls,

Over a year ago, I was given a copy of a copy of a copy of the audio tape, "To Train Up A Child." At that time, our youngest child was in the 21st year of life and it did not seem urgent to me to make the time required to listen to the tape.

However, in early January of 2000, while preparing for a business trip of about 1,500 miles in four days, I grabbed a bunch of audio tapes from the box marked "Not Listened To" to give me some company on the road. Needless to say, the first set of rubber banded tapes my hands landed on after hitting the road was "To Train Up A Child."

Since it was a fourth generation copy, the audio was very poor. While adjusting the radio volume to its highest level, boosting high frequency, and cutting the low, the thought occurred to me that it was highly likely I may not stay with this set of tapes through its entirety. (Note: Poor audio annoys me greatly)

Well, before long, in spite of poor audio, I found myself hugging the dashboard, trying to hear every word. I ended up listening to the set three times during the trip. Hopefully, other pastors, whose tapes I had with me, will not hold it to your charge that I spent the whole trip with you and did not share any of the trip with them.

Although I am thankful that God placed the copied tapes in my hands, I am not an advocate of copying tapes to pass to others and will destroy them as soon as we receive our purchase from you. Due to there not being any information on the tape copy to reach you, I had to remember who had given the set to me. After contacting several folks, I found the culprit and was able to obtain a copy of an order form from them.

Our hope is that this note encourages you both in that God is spreading your ministry efforts for his purpose, in spite of Satan's efforts to contain them.

Sincerely, with love, T. Y.

One of our readers has given a website address for information on the condition *hyperinsulemia*, which causes tremendous carbohydrate cravings, resulting in weight gain and often seen as "uncontrolled appetite." Type "Carbohydrate Addicts" in a search engine and it will take you to the site.
<http://NoGreaterJoy.org>

Dear Michael and Debi Pearl, Your books, tapes, and newsletters have been a big blessing to me. Your daughter's book and tape blessed my heart. Debi's homeschooling tape made me realize that I am a bully and if I hadn't been driving while listening to it, I would have fell on my knees and repented right there. Michael's conference tape made me laugh and get the point all at the same time. Please keep up the good work for the Lord and our families.

In Christ's Love, GG

Low self-esteem?

(Continued from page 7)

this project, he is not going to do it the way you think he should. He may let the weeds grow up and leave a mess in the yard. If this happens, make up your mind that you are not going to criticize him? Make him clean it up, but don't nag him until he feels your rejection. If you have a few good times with him shopping for plants and planning the project, it is not so important that he carry it through, just as long as you do not destroy the memories with unkind criticism.

Finally, I want to address the issue of your son's needs regarding his poor self-image. His self-worth will improve not through words, but through deeds—your deeds of understanding and authority and his deeds of accomplishments. He needs to be steered into a place where he can overcome in any area, where he can be the best at something, where he can be admired by someone he values. This cannot be pretend. He must actually succeed. He knows himself. He must better himself in some area to feel better about himself. It can be sports, model construction, fishing, hunting, wrestling, rope climbing, chess or checkers, mechanics, science, biology, astronomy, weight lifting, marshal arts, computer repair, carpentry, small engine repair, law mower repair, art, music, etc. Just don't fall into the trap of thinking that pity and caution will restore his soul. And do not allow him to cope by retreating to computer games or long periods of isolation in his room. Don't fuss at him; draw him out into a creative social life.

Read our third book on child training, "No Greater Joy Volume Two." It has some good advise for parents with kids going through puberty. ☺



For Debi:

I was very blessed to hear you and your husband speak in Roanoke, VA a few months ago. After the meeting we spoke briefly and you challenged me to submit to my husband. I cannot thank you enough for your boldness and wisdom! Our home is such a different place! You asked that I send a testimony (at the time I was not quite sure I would have one) but the Lord did a work of repentance in my heart and I want to share it with you. This is the way our home used to be: I thought I was a submissive wife. I did not work outside the home. I homeschooled. I tried to please my husband. I "ran my household" well. That is, I kept it clean—home cooked meals and the like. I was depressed every morning; I hated to face another day. I was also suffering from quite severe asthma. My five-year-old was very irritating. He was loud, laughed obnoxiously, and was not interested in any "school." My husband and I did not seem to agree on lots of "little" things and seemed to have much inexplicable (at the time) tension.

To make it worse, we planned to go on the mission field in the 10.40 window. I was particularly fearful of this prospect, although I sensed we were called to go. I just couldn't imagine how we could do much good when we were so miserable! (I had one thought right!) Well, on that night in Roanoke, I realized that I was truly "running the household." I had been trying to hold on to something for my own. I wanted to make the decisions on the everyday things like meals, child training techniques, schedules, etc. I desperately clenched my fists to control something, and it was wearing me out, as well as squeezing my poor family to death! I was struck by Michael's statement that we want our children to learn, "not my will, but thine," as the Lord had said. WOW - I no longer had to feel sorry for my children when I disciplined them (or when my husband did.) I had a truly higher calling now. And, even greater, I realized I was not truly saying, "not my will, but thine," to the Lord. I knew I had to relinquish everything to Him and fully submit to my husband and trust God as Sarah did. Suddenly, the picture of Christ and the Church was more vivid. I had to submit in order for our family to bring glory to Christ. Well, today, everything around here is quite different. Thank God for His mercy! We have a mom who is surrendered to obedience. My asthma is completely gone (I had already made some dietary changes prior to this that helped significantly—but since Feb., even amongst allergy season, I am doing great.) The stress of the responsibility of having to run everything no longer depresses me. I look forward to the new day as I wake in the morning. My husband and I are truly enjoying each other. My five-year-old does not act "stupid" anymore; he is a joy. I think he was just trying so desperately to make our home a happy place that he would laugh and be loud inappropriately. I have waited approximately 2 months to write this...I wanted to make sure it wouldn't wear off. By God's grace, I think it's gonna stick. Thank you for the ministry that your example has displayed. I believe it is truly a big part of the power behind your husband's ministry. There is some mystery to submission. I am so glad God used you to reveal it to me.

Thank you! R

Questions Answered

Dear Michael and Debi Pearl,

I am a young mom with four small children (ages 5 and under.) I am still learning so much as I have been a selfish mom and wife in the past. I am trusting God to perfect that which He has started in my life and I know that He is able.

Will you please help me with a few questions?

What to do with a four-year-old and a two-year-old who continually suck their thumbs while also sticking one finger up their noses (boys! I'm afraid they'll damage something, and I have tried so much...) Please help!

Thumb sucking and other forms of infantile stimulation are not character issues, and therefore not an object of great concern, unless such habits hang on long enough to be a social problem or unless they are used as a form of emotional retreat. When children express their moodiness or rebellion by lapsing into this or other forms of self-stimulation, it needs to be addressed. Pull his hand away and say, "Take your hand away from your mouth." The repetition of pulling the hand away and giving a simple, non-irritated response will help curb and maybe break the habit. However, anytime you see a child respond to command or rebuke (such as: eat your spinach) by retreating to thumb sucking, give a swat to the hand and follow through completely to get immediate obedience to the original command. This emotional retreat will cause more problems than buckteeth.

Please give me a description of the switch or rod of which you so often speak. I wish you could send me one so I could see it.

The rod we speak of is a plumbing supply line that can be bought at any hardware store or large department store. It is a slim, flexible,

plastic tubing that supplies water to sinks, and toilets. Ask for "¼ inch supply line." They cost less than one dollar. I always give myself one swat before I swat the child to remind myself how much force to exert. It stings the skin without bruising or damaging tissue. It's a real attention getter. Michael demonstrates its use in our new Seminar videos.

My 8-year-old daughter tells me everything. My husband heard her telling about some things that happened at church and he said it sounded like gossip. How can I encourage her to tell it without her engaging in gossip?

Many mothers establish emotionally intense bonds with their children by encouraging "telling all." The "all" the child learns to tell is how bad everyone else's children are and how he alone choose righteousness. Tiny details, such as the other child's expression or attitude are discussed as well as "why do you think they...?" It is amazing how fast a small child can become subtle in knowing when to leave out or add a word, a phrase, an expression, an emotion, or an opinion, thus changing the whole color of what really happened. Once this habit is established it is very hard for mother to see the deception that is so apparent to others. By your eagerness to hear the tale and respond you are encouraging the child into being an "accuser of the brethren." This also causes all other siblings to avoid and dislike the "tattle tail." A house full of "tattle tails" causes extreme mistrust between them.

On the other hand, you want your children to feel free to talk to you, to seek out your counsel and enjoy sharing with you. When children feel comfortable that you are just, they will seek an open relationship that is wholesome and profitable, and not one based on the faults

of others. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8. Encourage a good report, something that extols his brother and sister.

Michael adds his two cents:

The key to encouraging a wholesome attitude in your daughter lies in your response. Never develop a "them and us" attitude. Don't lead your daughter to feel superior to others. You should be sad when you hear of the failure of others. Discuss with your daughter ways to help the bad situations. Never allow your daughter to feel a closeness to you by tattling on others. If she emotionally profits from running others down, she will keep doing it even to the point of lying.

Finally, make sure that you do not talk about the faults of others. Never enjoy the tale that is told. Teach your daughter to minister to others, not to feel superior to them. You do this by example. ☺

Yes, it's OK with us.

Several people have written asking if it is OK with us if they buy our material and resell it. Absolutely! We encourage you to purchase our materials in volume and resell them at homeschool conventions or wherever your imagination takes you. Some people have found they can supplement their income and have a ministry at the same time. We will also furnish you with a number of newsletters to give away.

Dear Brother Pearl,

Thank you for sending the Revelation booklet to accompany the Revelation painting. I was, however, delighted with the one on Repentance. As I read it I thought: Hey this is really great! Now I'll tell you why.

My husband and I were missionaries to Brazil for nearly 29 years, during which time he spent many hours in personal Bible study. He happened to comment that Israel was basically called to repentance, whereas the gentile people are called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This was taken by a colleague as an occasion to accuse my husband of false doctrine. He had to write a paper on repentance for our mission board to read. It read almost as if it had been a summary of your booklet, which of course it wasn't as we had never heard of you in 1984.

They read the paper, heard my husband's defense, and dropped the accusation. Our colleague eventually left the ministry entirely, and we continued to minister in Brazil another 11 years until our retirement in 1995. My dear husband received his promotion to heaven a year ago, and he is greatly missed by the many whose lives he influenced.

I treasure your booklet and am so glad it was sent to me. May God keep you and your family ever close to Himself and bold in the preaching of the Word.

In Christ, DH

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Pearl,

Let me share a funny story with you. A friend of mine gets this newsletter out of "nowhere," talking about child training. She tells me I would really like it, but I did not think too much about it until she got her tapes. She kept saying, over and over, you should listen to these tapes, they are really good. Finally, she brought me the tapes and I began to listen to them. Within the first 3 minutes I was appalled! I stopped the tape, called her and said, this man is nuts! I agreed with everything you said about training children as well as how to train them. It was your thoughts on public school that upset me. You see, I was currently a first grade teacher in public school. I said, "He has never set foot in my classroom, he doesn't know squat. Maybe it is like that in the big city, but not in my small town, not in my room!" I went on maternity leave soon after and decided to homeschool my daughter for the year. The Lord has taught me a lot over the past year, including my ignorance! I was always very careful not to teach any of that anti-God stuff. But unknowingly, I did. Under the guise of critical thinking, values clarification, and higher-order learning skills, new age came into my classroom. I must say, you have never been in my classroom, but you couldn't have been more accurate in your statements, even in my small town, even in my classroom.

I know the Lord has a sense of humor, because the same person who thought you were nuts is now just as nuts as you are! I am currently helping 3 families begin their road to homeschooling!

In Christ, B.T.

MISSIONARIES

T. J. Slayman is still in Laos translating Scripture and ministering the gospel.

T. J. Slayman senior and his wife Kathy are now in Thailand ministering in the prisons. There are over 2000 foreigners, English speaking prisoners, incarcerated there. The system is so bad that over 200 prisoners die every month. They have to eat roaches and rats to survive. Conditions are far worse than the concentration camps of W.W.II—worse than the prisoner of war camps. Tom went with no promise of support. He draws about \$900.00 a month in disability pension—wounds from Vietnam. Tom and Kathy sold their milk cows and chickens and left their little farm to answer the call to visit those in prison. Tom has proven to be the best soul winner in our church. We are thankful to be able to send him to minister the word.

Steve and Margaret Schnell are still in Cambodia ministering.

We are continuing with a ministry in East Timor, printing Bible portions and witnessing.

The Picture Bible project is making great progress.

We are preparing for literature distribution in the Australian Olympics this fall.

We are still supporting missionaries in several other parts of the world, including Tom Gaudet in the Philippines and East Timor.

Rebekah is about to be married and is not longer in foreign missions.

Dwayne Noel is back in the states and is settled down assisting in a local church ministry.

Gabriel, Michael Braband, and Ben recovered from their sickness. Michael is ready to go back to East Timor. Pray for our missionaries. ☺



By Debi Pearl

Bilberry

The Anti-aging Herb

The old man smiled at me and continued his story of how he found his new bride of three years. At least 10 times he wheased out, "I love her so much." He liked to talk, and I found his stories fascinating. He told me that at 70 years old he found himself widowed, alone, and yearning for a friend and buddy. But he was a diabetic and had already begun to have many problems with his eyes, as well as other health problems.

Several years earlier I was working in the herb garden when he came to tell me about the death of his first wife. I ask him about his health and received his sorry report. It was then I told him about Bilberry and the amazing results I had experienced in getting rid of my cataracts and about my own mom and dad's recovering eye sight, after taking Bilberry. He declared he would start taking it that day.

Several months later, he came to introduce us to his new lady, which he proudly told us was about to become his wife. He was also excited to tell me about his eyes and the improvement in his poor circulation—due to his diabetes. He said his eyes, which for years had steadily declined, had taken a turn for the better after starting Bilberry herb. At his last check up his eyes had improve 10%. And that's not all. He

said with a big smile, a side wink, and a gentle hug to his lady, "I'm just generally getting in better shape everyday."

I saw him again yesterday and he spent almost an hour telling me how much he loved his sweetheart wife. He was cutting the grave yard grass. Afterward, he was heading out to cut 2 more large lawns. In Tennessee the grass grows thick and tall, and the weather is hot and clammy. It is a job cutting one lawn for the hardest of men. After he had given me an hour disertation about the happiest three years of his life, with his wonderful sweet lover, he continued on to tell me the merits of Bilberry. After three years on Bilberry, his eyes have continued to improve as has his over all health. For a 73 year old diabetic, that is close to a miracle.

Bilberry's bitter compounds inhibit collagen destruction, scavenge free radicals, reduce capillary permeability, increase blood circula-

Make your own tinctures and save money

tion to peripheral blood vessels and the brain, reduce inflammation and pain and relieve muscle spasms. It is known as an anti-aging herb. My old, talkative friend can attest to that.

Bilberry has been used to treat poor vision, bruising, capillary fragility, varicose veins, Raynaud's disease, poor circulation due to diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, gout, and peridental disease, as well as a host of related health problems.

No pilot would take to the skies during W.W.II without first eating Bilberry jam. It was thought to be a "pilot thing" until studies proved that Bilberry is so effective that a single dose improves one's night vision. Regular use of the fruit results in quicker adjustment to darkness and glare and improved visual acuity both at night and in bright light.

Bilberry is being studied in the prevention and treatment of glaucoma.

Bilberry has been effective in helping control diabetes and the ugly debilitating effects of the disease. It improves the circulatory system, thus helping preserve the connective tissue and capillary function.

So if you are 70 years old and about to remarry, or you have any of the above mentioned health problems, I would highly recommend taking Bilberry herb or eating Bilberry jam every day. It is safe for expectant and nursing mamas. I take it; Mike takes it; my mom and dad take it; and both of the old newly-weds take it.

It is available in any health food store, and some pharmacies. If you can't afford the high prices of pre-packaged herbs, you can buy the dried herbs in bulk and prepare your own. Bulk herbs will cost about 1-5% of the commercially prepared herbs. And with bulk herbs, you know you are getting the real thing.

Our son, Nathan Pearl, sells bulk herbs. If you write to him he will send you a free price sheet and some information on the preparation and use of herbs. Don't write to us here at the church about herbs. We have no connection to Nathan's business.

Write to:

**THE BULK HERB STORE,
1010 Pearl Road,
Pleasantville, TN 37033.**

Request information on Herbs. ☺

Michael & Debi Pearl published To Train Up a Child in August 1994. By June of 2000 over 250,000 copies have been sold. This newsletter came about as a way to answer the many questions received in the mail each day. Other books have followed which answer the many questions.

The Pearls receive no remuneration from the sale of these books and tapes. This is a ministry operated through The Church At Cane Creek where Michael Pearl is pastor/teacher. The low prices reflect our concern to make these materials available to as many as possible. We give a 38-45% discount on books by the Pearls when purchased in volumes of eight or more. We also make available a limited number of books and videos that we believe will be a great blessing to your family.

We are dedicated to the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ in those countries where Christ is least known. Monies received from books and tapes more than pay for their distribution. After operating expenses, all money from the sale of books goes to foreign missions. All gifts go directly to foreign missions, none being retained here in the States, unless otherwise designated by the donor.

All who have ordered materials from us during the past twelve months are automatically put on our mailing list to receive our free monthly newsletter. However, you need not purchase materials to continue receiving this newsletter. We are here to serve you, but we must know that you are interested. If we haven't heard from you in a year, drop us a brief note, or just a card with your name and address. It is our joy to serve you. 😊

Now, enjoy the teaching of Michael and Debi Pearl on video in this five hour, three tape series. Learn how they successfully trained up their five children with love, humor, the rod and a King James Bible.
\$24.00

New Website Address:

<http://NoGreaterJoy.org>

The Church at Cane Creek

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PLEASANTVILLE, TN 37033

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