

Reformed A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

SEPTEMBER 2015
Volume 34 Issue No. 11

PERSPECTIVE

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS

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IN DEFENSE OF BIBLICAL SPANKING

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by Rob Slane



**DIFFERENT IS GOOD!
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READERS' RESPONSE

DEAR EDITOR,

I appreciated the article entitled "The Social Media Game" by Martin VanWoudenberg in the June *RP*. He gave us all a lot to think about.

One point that I would like to make, however, is that sharing thoughts on Facebook is really no different than what many of us have always done. How many of us have mentioned a difficulty at Bible study/church/or prayer chain and been glad when others offered to pray or help? How many of us can admit that when we bought a new dress and wore it to church, we hoped to receive a compliment? It is not that people are suddenly looking for validation; it's just that the location for that has changed.

In my case, Facebook is where I see my family's and friends' pictures that I would probably not see otherwise. It is where I hear of good and bad, where prayer requests are brought, and sometimes deep discussions are held. Sure, I'd rather do it in person, but with distance and busyness, it's not likely to happen.

Facebook, at its best, is like stopping in at the town's general store to chat with whomever is there.

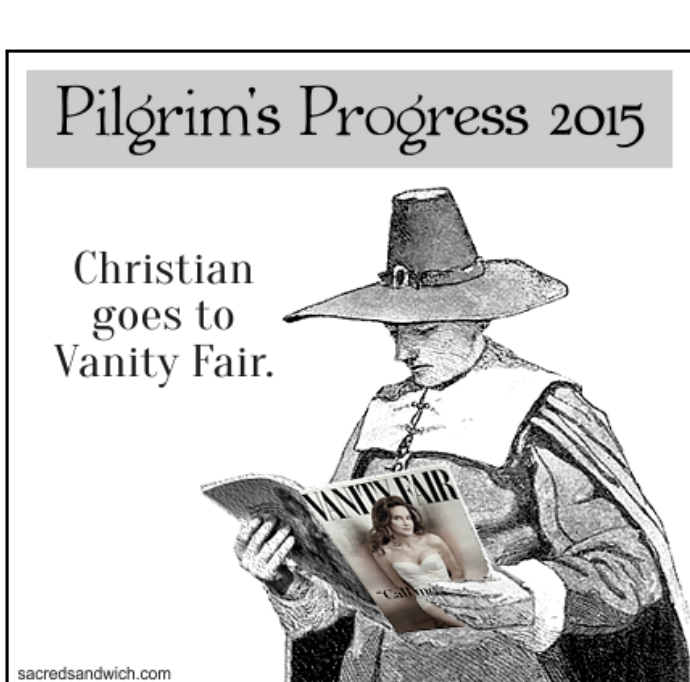
Sharon Bratcher
Redford, Michigan

EDITOR'S RESPONSE:

It's certainly true that narcissism is not unique to social media. But there are reasons why the pull of this temptation is more powerful on social media than in face-to-face conversations.

Perhaps the main reason is that while talking about ourselves nonstop is a faux pas in any face-to-face conversation, it is an expectation on Facebook. Also, narcissism in person will lead to yawns and drooping eyelids – easy to decipher negative feedback. However this same behavior on Facebook could get positive (if limited) feedback if 5 of our 500 friends "like" our latest what-I-ate-for-breakfast selfie.

Martin VanWoudenberg's warning against narcissism is relevant to more than social media but it is especially important for this particular medium.



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CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS

Presents

Live ^{what you} Believe



JOSHUA APPEL

is a teaching Fellow at New St. Andrews College where he teaches the ever popular elective Aesthetic Gastronomy.



COLIN GUNN

is a filmmaker & the director / producer of *Indoctrination*, *Wait Till It's Free*, *Act Like Min*, *Captivated*, & *Shaky Town*.



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ONLINE

Spanking on trial

How to make a public defense

by Jon Dykstra

If spanking were to be put on public trial how would the jury rule?

In countries like the Netherlands, Germany, New Zealand and more than 40 others the verdict has come down firmly against – they’ve all instituted spanking bans. In Canada we could say the jury is out – we’re allowed to spank children over two. But what’s worrisome is that spanking opponents keep pushing the issue: since 1997 various members of Parliament have tried to pass anti-spanking amendments eight times, the latest happening just this year.

In the court of public opinion spanking should win any test it’s put to because, after all, it works. It is a God-ordained means of discipline, and it is no coincidence that it is also an effective means of discipline.

THE TRIAL IS RIGGED

But spanking never gets a fair trial. Just consider these three issues it has to overcome...

1) MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The act of a raging drunken father beating up his son bears little resemblance to a loving calm dad giving his son a spanking. Unfortunately, members of the jury don’t seem able to tell the difference between the two.

Some of this confusion is understandable. Raging fathers will call what they do “spanking,” but of course abusers often lie so the jury should know better than to trust their testimony. Another source of confusion is that many of the abused also use the term “spanking” to describe what happened to them.

This is a horrible case of mistaken identity that we need to clear up if spanking is to win its day in court.

2) WITNESSES INTIMIDATION

The very same people who will publicly attest to their love of God by wearing a

cross, or who will speak up for the unborn by wearing a pro-life T-shirt, or speak out against gay marriage via social media, don’t dare advocate for spanking. Why? Because we’ve all heard stories about how various child protection services have taken people’s kids. How’s that for intimidation?

Spankings’ best witnesses don’t want to take the stand – we know this is an important discipline tool, but few of us see it as important enough to risk losing our kids over. So those who do it right keep that such a closely guarded secret that even their neighbors may not know they use it.

The end result is that when claims are made that spanking is the worst sort of abuse, the witnesses that could best correct this case of mistaken identity don’t want to – we’ve been intimidated into silence.

3) OFFERS OF IMMUNITY REJECTED

A second group of parents is staying silent for a different reason. They’re not intimidated; they simply feel too guilty. These are parents who have given spankings in anger and out of frustration. To be clear, we’re not talking about child-beaters – though the parent’s motivations are all wrong, their actions still look quite like godly spanking. Restraint is still used in both where the spanking is directed – to the child’s back end, where no damage will be done – and in how much is administered. This is not a parent losing it. But it is a parent punishing rather than disciplining, a parent meting out justice without love.

Some in this group know all about loving discipline, and sin anyway. That leaves them feeling guilty and then, when the topic of spanking comes up, they’d really rather talk about something/anything else. But this is no way to address our guilt – wallowing in it silently is no solution. If you’ve spanked the wrong way, God wants you to repent, both to Him and to your child, and to turn from your sinful behavior. And, praise God, He offers forgiveness!

Other parents simply don’t know how to spank properly, though they can sense there is something wrong about how they are going about it. There is a need for repentance here too, but also education – to turn away from our sinful ways we need to know how to act. Parents need to find out what God has told us about disciplining our children, and there are some excellent resources to be found (see the sidebar “Spanking: rare or regular?” on page 8).

It’s a given that Christian parents who do spankings right are also parents who at some point have done spankings wrong. We shouldn’t minimize our sin, but we also shouldn’t minimize the grace given us when God and our children accept our repentance. To hold on to guilt then, and let it silence us, is to reject the grace we’ve been offered.

Spanking needs its imperfect practitioners to speak up on its behalf because if we won’t there is no one else.

KEYS TO A PUBLIC DEFENSE

These three issues put spanking in a tough spot, with accusers aplenty but few defenders. So even as we can be cautious about how we go about it, we do need to become public defenders of spanking. Or rather, we need to become public defenders of spanking done biblically.

Spanking isn’t the sort of topic that can be addressed with “I spank my kids” T-shirt slogans or “Spanking is not abuse” bumper stickers. The extent of the confusion is more than can be addressed via those short-form mediums.

What’s needed are conversations. Conversations over back fences. Over coffee. Over social media. And maybe more than we might imagine, conversations at church: Christians, too, are being swayed into equating this biblically-mandated practice with abuse.

So what might such a conversation involve? What follows is a “mock



talk" (based on real ones) between a Christian, Daniel, and two very liberal-thinking friends who don't spank and don't know anyone who does.

Daniel understands that his position will be very new to his friends so he's prepared to be *repetitious* – he knows he may need to make the same point a few different ways.

He also knows that on such a contentious issue things could get heated fast, so whenever possible he wants to make his point by asking *questions*, rather than by making assertions. Questions are less contentious. They can also help defuse an insulting point by asking the insulter to clarify their insult. "You've said spanking is abuse because both involve hitting, so do you think lovemaking is rape because both involve intercourse?"

Another important technique Daniel will use is to employ *analogies*. Jesus taught using parables in part because stories can help make hard to understand points clearer, and more memorable.

LEO: I was raised when they still practiced corporal punishment in schools. So I got hit at school and then my heavy-

handed dad would beat me when I got home. Why would anyone think spanking is a good idea?

ARIEL: I grew up in a home where spanking and screaming were the norm. I felt ashamed. I just wanted my parents to love me. I vowed I wouldn't do that to my kids. Now I do discipline by the golden rule: I treat my children how I wanted to be treated. There's no way I'd spank my kids.

DANIEL: We don't beat our kids; we do spank them. While my daughter is regularly given spankings, they are conducted calmly. Her mom or dad is controlled, and not angry, and after the spanking comes hugs and a talk. So there is no confusion about whether mom or dad still loves her. Meanwhile I've seen parents who would never consider spanking their child who think nothing of yelling at their toddler. As the Bible says, we must discipline, but in love (Prov. 13:24). I think that can be done with calm spanking. I don't understand how it can be done with screaming.

ARIEL: Don't call it spanking. It's hitting. If you're going to hit a tiny, defenseless human, own it. Don't use cutesy euphemisms. Abuse is abuse.

DANIEL: Wow! This got nasty fast. Are you really going to call me a child abuser? Are you going to claim that what I do is anything like what a drunken father does when he punches his son in the face?

ARIEL: There is a difference, but it's still the same act – in both cases it's hitting.

DANIEL: Is shoving someone out of the way of an oncoming train the same kind of act as shoving them in front of one? In both cases there's pushing.

ARIEL: That's different. In the first case the intent is to help the person and in the second it's to hurt them.

DANIEL: Exactly. The purpose makes them different acts. Spanking bears no resemblance– in intent or execution – to what an abusive father does. Instead of punches to the face I give smacks to the bottom, where it will sting but not harm. It couldn't be more different.

LEO: I wouldn't call it child abuse, but I do think spanking sends mixed signals. If I tell my child that hitting is wrong, but hit him when he does something wrong, doesn't that tell him that hitting solves things?

DANIEL: I'll drink a glass of wine in front of my children. And when they ask for a taste I'll tell them no. It's not hypocritical to have different standards for children than for adults. And when it comes to spanking, a child can tell the difference between her attempt to solve something with her fists, and when daddy, calmly and in control, spansks her for hitting someone. Mixed signals do come into play when a parent isn't controlled or calm. Then what the parent is doing might seem very much like what the child does when she strikes out at another child in anger.

LEO: I'm not accusing you, but the majority of people that I know do not spank when they are calm and controlled.

DANIEL: That's the problem - when a child is spanked in anger, this is vengeance, not discipline. As one pastor put it, "Discipline is corrective and is applied for the sake of the one receiving it. It is not punitive, and is not rendered for the sake of the one giving it....When you are highly motivated to discipline your kids, you are

not qualified." Or to put it another way, if you *want* to spank your kids right now, that is a good reason not to.

ARIEL: Since other discipline options exist why use spanking?

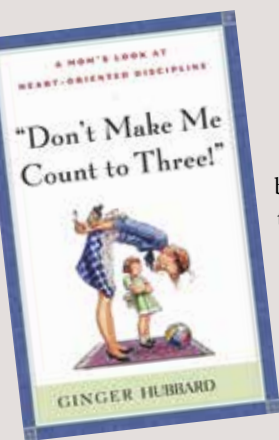
DANIEL: I spank because God tells us corporal punishment is a helpful way of disciplining our child. And it's no coincidence that the method God prescribes turns out to be an effective and quick corrective. All discipline (time outs, stern warnings, lectures, etc.) is going to involve "emotional trauma." But with a spanking it can often be brief: willful disobedience happens, the corrective is explained and applied, the child says she is sorry, forgiveness is given, hugs and kisses are exchanged and play then continues. I want to add, spanking is not the only discipline we use - we talk, we explain, we send them to their room, etc. But when our daughters do something they know they are not allowed to do - when the disobedience is clear (it isn't a matter of confusions, misunderstanding, immaturity), then we spank.

LEO: Does spanking always work?

DANIEL: Spanking isn't going to help a child who melts down after having been up late the previous few nights. They need bed. Spanking isn't a cure-all. Sometimes a long cuddle is the best response to a child's misbehaviour, offering them undeserved mercy. When to do what can be hard to figure out so I'm very thankful God has offered so much guidance in his Word on disciplining children.

LEO: Isn't the intent of spanking to cause pain in order to gain compliance? I fully acknowledge that spanking is not child abuse when done properly, but its intent is still to cause harm, whereas with timeouts the intent is to cause discomfort as well as help them figure out what to do better next time - it gives them time to think through things and improve their problem-solving skills.

DANIEL: "Discomfort" is a good word. The intent of spanking is not to cause harm (and no harm is done - that is why it is



Spankings: rare or regular?

Soon after my first little one became old enough to articulate her sinful nature ("no" wasn't her first word, but it was the first she learned to shout with conviction) I asked friends who had travelled this route before a very practical question: "How often do you spank your kids?"

I was the youngest in my family and as far as I could remember my dad had spanked me less than a dozen times. Of course I don't remember much of what my life was like before Grade One, so I suspected the true count could have been greater by an exponential factor.

THE NUCLEAR OPTION?

So I asked around. I knew spanking was biblical, but what I didn't know was if it was something to be used only in the rarest of circumstances, maybe once a month or less? Or was spanking the sort of thing that might occur weekly, daily, or even a few times a day? In other

words, was this supposed to be a regular tool to use, or the "nuclear bomb" option to be turned to only when all else had failed?

I asked around and the response I got was wry grins and shrugged shoulders. No one seemed willing to clue me in.

A few years later, and as a seasoned father of three, I think I now understand the reason for this silence - it's because *no one* talks about spanking. *Ever*. So no one has any idea of how often other parents spank their kids. In this informational void, who would want to own up to spanking their kids multiple times the previous day if it turns out that all your friends only have to spank their kids a couple times a year?

That's a long way of explaining why I love Ginger Hubbard's *Don't Make Me Count to Three!* It is a highly practical book that offers all sorts of answers. While she doesn't give an exact number as to how many times a day, week, or month we should spank our kid, Hubbard does make it clear that spanking is not some nuclear bomb option to be employed only when all else has failed. She makes a clear biblical case

that physical discipline should be applied with regularity (and on some days a child may well require multiple spanking).

REACHING FOR THE HEART

Mind you, this is much more than a book on spanking. That's just one of three sections. The first is on "Reaching the heart of your child," the second on "How to give a biblical reproof," and it is only in the third that we get to "The biblical use of the rod."

Hubbard starts things off by showing herself to be a Ted Tripp disciple. Like Tripp she wants us to understand that simply having obedient kids can't be our objective - that's something that any Drill Sergeant could manage. What we want are kids who love the Lord and *want to do the right thing to please Him*. To do that, we want to speak to their hearts and direct them to God. In this first section, early on, we encounter one of the real strengths of the book: the many sample conversations Hubbard includes. She uses these to contrast how parents might typically talk to their kids, with the very different way a heart-

done on the behind). The goal is teaching. I talk with my daughter after a spanking; we work through what she could have done differently and what she should do in the future. So, like your child, she learns problem-solving skills, and also what is wrong and what is right. The goal is to teach.

LEO: Couldn't you do that all minus the spanking part?

DANIEL: Ah, but why would I? Spanking is an effective form of discipline, and I have found it more so than many others.

ARIEL: How do you know for sure that the effective part of the ritual isn't the talking?

DANIEL: Ariel, let me direct your question back at you. If you've never tried spanking, or tried it once, or tried it in ways that were not careful and controlled, how do you know that spanking isn't more effective than your approach? As for which part is the more effective, the spanking or the talking, both are necessary. So are the hugs, so is the repentance and forgiveness.

seeking, Bible-following parent would address their child. The conversations are believable, and wonderfully instructive. In one example she discusses the common way parents resolve sibling dispute. "Who had it first?" we ask. And when that is discovered, we put the toy in the first child's hands and think we are done - justice is served. But are we really done? After all, we still have a covetous child (two in fact) who cared more about having this toy than about their sibling's happiness. Hubbard shows another way we could address this that speaks to a child's heart:

"Honey, Wesley has that toy right now. Do you think he is enjoying playing with it?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Do you think it would make him happy or sad if you took it away?"

"Sad."

"Would you delight in making your brother sad?"

"No ma'am."

"Do you think that it would be kind or rude for you to try to take away something that he is enjoying?"

"Rude."

"That's right Alex, and *love is not rude*. When Wesley is through with it, and puts it down,

LEO: But when do you stop? What age?

DANIEL: It peters out as they get older for a few reasons. First, it's because the goal of parenting is to "graduate" a self-discipline adult, so the reins are loosened more and more as they get older. But when they are young things are a good deal stricter. Some people try to do the reverse - little discipline early, and then find themselves trying to get strict later and regulate their rebellious teen's every waking moment. Won't work - this is when he should be taking on responsibility, not when he should be treated like a 3-year-old. Another reason spanking stops is because there are other, more effective, ways of causing older children "discomfort" - taking away their driving privileges, or smartphone.

LEO: Ariel and I have to run now. I've enjoyed the discussion.

DANIEL: I did too. I don't suppose I've convinced you spanking is a vital discipline tool, but I do hope that going forward you won't confuse spanking with abuse.

then you may ask for it."

The goal is to make them understand their sin, and also understand what God thinks of it. We are training their hearts, teaching them what sin to "put off," but also how best to "put on" (Eph. 4:22-24) love - how best to show love for their siblings.

SPANKING IS GOD-ORDAINED

In the final two sections Hubbard addresses what biblical reproof does, and does not, look like, and then discusses spanking in some detail. This last topic is clearly the most controversial, even among Christians, but Hubbard makes it clear that for Christ's Church this should be a settled matter. She writes:

The use of the rod according to godly principles is clearly taught in the Scriptures... To say, "I don't believe in spanking," is to say that God's ordained methods for child training are wrong. It's to rejected God's Word. It's to say that you are wiser than God Himself.

So the question is not whether, but how. Hubbard answers that question over the course of 4 chapters, addressing both when to, and when

Spanking is being tried in the court of public opinion and the trial is rigged. That's why we need to speak up. We can speak cautiously, and wisdom might dictate that those with an empty roost should take the lead because they have little to lose. But we all need to speak, whether over the back fence with a neighbor, or more publicly in a political setting. Spanking is being equated with abuse, but God says loving fathers will use this corporal punishment. So speak out, and spank in love. Let us be a light to our friends and neighbors on this issue showing how in this - as in all things - God's ways are better than anything the world has to offer.

Spanking does have some public defenders, including ARPA Canada, who in 2013 released an excellent policy report about corporal punishment which they sent to every Member of Parliament. To read the report visit ARPACanada.ca and search for "spanking." Jon Dykstra can be reached at editor@reformedperspective.ca.

not to spank. She notes it is about discipline and teaching, not punishment and justice, so spanking must never be done in anger, and only in love. Her answers are biblically grounded, and crystal clear - this will help any parent the moment they start reading it.

CONCLUSION

While Hubbard is a conservative Christian she isn't Reformed - it is evident in several passages that she viewed her children as little pagans in need of conversion. In contrast we know that, as a part of the covenant, our children are very much a part of God's church, even as infants. However, the structure of discipline Hubbard lays out is scriptural and thus how we should treat our covenantal kids.

I highly recommend it - this would make a wonderful gift to any new parent.

OTHER RESOURCES

Two other great resources on spanking and child discipline are the audio set *Biblical Childrearing* by Douglas Wilson (available on CD, or as a \$6 download at CanonPress.com) and the video series *Getting to the Heart of Parenting* by Paul Tripp (available on DVD or as a \$35 download at PaulTripp.com).

NOTA BENE

News worth noting

DIVORCE RATE NOWHERE NEAR 50%

BY ANNA NIENHUIS



For once a study on marriage has found positive results: there is a declining divorce rate in North America and more happy marriages than anyone suspected. The extensive 8-year study is the grounds for a new book by researcher Shaunti Feldhahn focused on *The Good News about Marriage: Debunking discouraging myths about marriage and divorce*.

While many of us have heard the statistic that 50% of marriages end in divorce, Feldhahn was pleasantly shocked to learn that actual divorce rates have never been close to that. In fact, that number is based on speculation from the 1970s and 1980s regarding what *might* happen with the introduction of the then new no-fault divorce laws. Somehow that guestimate was later understood to be fact. However the real numbers seem closer to 20-25% in first-time marriages, and lower yet in Christian circles.

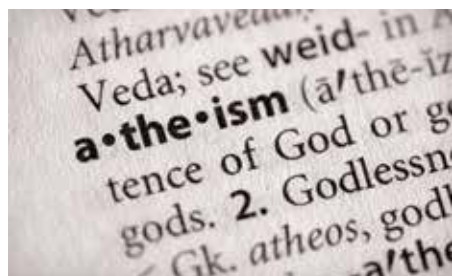
In addition, you may have heard estimates suggesting that only 30% of the marriages that last are actually happy, while most are just sticking it out without any real joy. In fact, Feldhahn found that, at the end of a five-year period, 4 out of 5 marriages can be considered happy!

Research such as this verifies what we've always known, but what we may have been led to doubt by the many misleading claims we've heard in the media. The truth is marriages built on Christ are built to last, and marriage can bring great joy to those involved.

SOURCE: Matt Barber's "You may have heard that the divorce rate in the church is 50%...get ready to be shocked"; westernjournalism.com

ATHEIST WANTS TO REMAIN A PASTOR

BY JON DYKSTRA



Gretta Vosper, an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, is also an atheist. She says she has been open about her atheism since speaking about it in a sermon back in 2001. Accord to Vosper, her anti-God stance didn't bother her congregation, or at least it didn't until, seven years later, she decided to do away with the Lord's Prayer. Then 100 members of her 150-member congregation left. An atheist pastor was no problem, it seems, but don't mess with the liturgy!

Still, the denomination didn't act until, as *The Globe and Mail* put it:

...she wrote an open letter to the church's spiritual leader pointing out that belief in God can motivate bad things — a reference to the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris.

That stirred the church executive up enough for them to want to "investigate her fitness to be a minister." Just one problem: they first needed to figure out the process. As Rev. David Allen explained, "We'd never done it before."

And one can only wonder why they are starting now. Already back in 1997 the church's moderator, Rev. Bill Phipps, said of Christ, "I don't believe He rose from the dead as a scientific fact. I don't know whether those things happened. It's an irrelevant question."

You could be excused if you thought this story was from *The Onion* or some other parody website. But even they couldn't fabricate anything this ridiculous. It is all, sadly, true.

SOURCES: Bob Harvey's "I don't believe Jesus was God" printed in The Ottawa Citizen Oct. 24, 1997; Colin Perkel's "Atheist minister fighting United Church's effort to fire her" posted online Aug 5, 2015.

EXTREME POVERTY HALVED IN TEN YEARS

BY JON DYKSTRA

Bad news abounds, so here's something fantastic! According to a new Pew Research Center analysis, in the space of ten years the percentage of the world population living in poverty was halved. It dropped from 29% in 2001 to just 15% in 2011.

That amounts to 669 million people having their living standards raised from what was deemed "poor" up to the level of "low income." Pew Research Associate Director Rakesh



Kochhar said of the shift up that it "seems to be without precedent in the past two centuries."

SOURCE: Rakesh Kochhar's "A Global Middle Class is More Promise Than Reality" posted July 8, 2015 to PewGlobal.org

HOW THE MEDIA INCREASES THE PEER PRESSURE

BY JON DYKSTRA



Did you know that the vast majority of countries around the world recognize that marriage is only between a man and a woman?

If you are surprised it's likely because the mainstream media have been feeding us all a very different perception. Journalist Anthony Fisher recently highlighted one example of this mainstream media bias as it regards same sex marriage (SSM) or, as Douglas Wilson more properly puts it, "same sex mirage":

[Australian] Senator Eric Abetz recently observed that the Austrian legislature's overwhelming vote against SSM (110 MPs to 26) went more or less unreported in Australia, while prominence was given to the "YES" vote on Pitcairn Island - a country with a population of 48! Far from being some sort of outlier, Australia's current marriage law reflects international law and the laws of the overwhelming majority of nations (172 of the United Nations' 193 members).

News consumers beware: even when the media reports the truth, the truth they choose to report can still be used to create false impressions that undermine God's Truth.

SOURCE: Antony Fisher's "Is marriage evolving? Or being dismantled?" posted to Mercatornet.com on July 28, 2015

BIBLE VOTED MOST INFLUENTIAL BOOK

BY ANNA NIENHUIS



Considered by the *Guinness World Record Book* to be the best-selling book of all time, a recent poll in the United States found the Bible is also considered society's most influential book. The poll, commissioned by the American Bible Society, found that 58% of Americans considered the Bible the most influential book ever. The runner-ups were so widely divided that none came close to challenging the Bible in its number one position. It seems Americans still recognize how God's Word has had an impact on law, politics, and social services, on top of its influence over individual's lives.

SOURCE: Christine Cape's "Americans' Top Book Is..." posted on July 28, 2015 to christiannewswire.com



CDC NOW ADMITS ABSTINENCE IS BEST

BY JON DYKSTRA

The best way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)? The answer is no surprise to Christians – it's abstinence or monogamy – but in the politically charged area of sexuality, what's obvious is not always what's acknowledged. So it's good news to hear that the leading public health institute in the US, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is now endorsing the undeniable – in a 2015 update to their STD treatment guidelines the CDC has gone from saying abstinence was "a reliable way" to now endorsing it as "the most reliable way."

SOURCE: Bob Kellogg's "CDC announces abstinence is best method for avoiding STDs" posted to OneNewsNow.com on June 15; CDC Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, 2015

UNIVERSITIES REALIZE SOME DISCRIMINATION IS REASONABLE

BY JON DYKSTRA



Last year the California State University system decided to strip official recognition from Christian student groups that required their leaders be Christian. Why? Because this requirement was viewed as discriminating against non-Christians on the basis of religion. But now a year

later there is good news: this decision has been reversed, allowing Christian student groups official recognition which in turn allows them access to meeting rooms on campus, and to the same funds as other student groups.

This California universities' initial stance misunderstood the reason we object to discrimination. We reject *arbitrary* discrimination: discrimination that has no basis. We should not treat as different that which is fundamentally the same. Therefore it is wrong to treat blacks differently than whites on the basis of the differing amount of pigment in our skin - this does not a *notable* difference make. However, it is not wrong to treat that which is different as different. So we give up

bus seats for the elderly, and reserve parking spots for the disabled, and task men with the job of opening sticky jar lids. Discrimination – treating them differently – is a good thing in this case, because they are different, and in a way that is significant and relevant. So while it is a matter of religious discrimination to require the leaders of a Christian group be Christian, this is not *arbitrary* discrimination – there is a good reason for it.

The California State University system has backed down, but InterVarsity Christian Fellowship has noted that other issues remain unresolved in other states.

SOURCE: Heather Clark's "Christian Campus Groups Stripped of Recognition for Requiring Christian Leaders Regain Rights" posted on ChristianNews.net on June 22, 2015.

EXPECTATIONS OF PERFECTION ARE CAUSING IMMENSE STRESS

BY SHARON BRATCHER



If media accounts are any indication, there has been a steady progression from "helicopter parents," who hover over and keep a close eye on their children's every move, to "lawnmower parents," who go beyond hovering to clear obstacles out of their children's way. "Children deserve to be strengthened, not strangled, by the fierceness of a parent's love," said Julie Lythcott-Haims, dean of freshmen at Stanford University in California. She was quoted in Julie Scelfo's *New York Times* article "Campus Suicide and the Pressure of Perfection" (July 27, 2015). The article delves into the difficulties that arise when young adults are not able to fend for themselves and they

are extremely attuned to their parents' expectations. These children disregard their own feelings and needs, and only feel fulfilled and happy when other people are happy with them and parents' expectations are met.

Thus, as a Penn State senior, Kahaari Kenyatta, said in the article:

Nobody wants to be the one who is struggling while everyone else is doing great. Despite whatever's going on – if you're stressed, a bit depressed, if you're overwhelmed – you want to put up this positive front.

At Stanford University, they refer to it as the Duck Syndrome – appearing to glide calmly across the water, while beneath the surface frantically, relentlessly paddling.

Six highly-driven, spectacular students at Penn State committed suicide when they felt that they couldn't live up to the level of perfection that was required. Tulane University lost four students and Appalachia State lost at least three. Just a few years back, Cornell lost six and New York University reported that five students leapt to their death. The suicide rate among 15 to 24 year olds

has increased modestly but steadily in the past eight years, with 11.1 per 100,000 in 2013. But college counseling centers report that more than half of their clients have severe problems with anxiety and depression. They believe that they must be perfect in every academic, co-curricular and social endeavor, and that is a lot of pressure.

How often do our church members also feel the need to make it look like life is rosy, when it is not? When God designed the church, He had in mind that believers would uphold one another in prayer, confess sins to one another without gossiping about it, and give each other support through the power of the Holy Spirit. And how often do parents find the 18 to 24 year old age group a difficult one to deal with? How often do we use our children's accomplishments to validate our own parenting? How often do we pressure our kids to accomplish – with the best motives in mind – but without really listening to them, or accepting their failures? Our children aren't going to be perfect, so instead of creating impossible expectations, we need to point them to the cross, where Christ paid for their sinful failings.

COURT SAYS PRO-LIFE PHARMACISTS HAVE TO HELP WITH ABORTIONS

BY JON DYKSTRA



An appeals court has ruled that Washington state is within its rights to force all pharmacies to carry the abortifacient Plan B or other emergency "contraceptives." As journalist Gene Johnson reported, two pharmacists challenged the law

...saying the rules required them to violate their religious beliefs, because the drugs can prevent implantation of a fertilized egg, which they consider tantamount to abortion. They argued that they should be allowed to refer patients to a nearby drug store

rather than fulfill the prescription themselves.

The concession these two pharmacists offered – to refer a customer to someone who would fill the prescription – is already a concession too far. If we are asked to help kill someone, does God want us to help with that act in any way? Are we allowed to refuse to be a part of it, but then help them find someone who is willing?

Even this concession wasn't enough for the appeals judges. In their ruling they wrote:

Speed is particularly important considering the time-sensitive nature of emergency contraception.... The time taken to travel to another pharmacy, especially in rural areas where pharmacies are sparse, may reduce the efficacy of those drugs.

But, as the pharmacists' deputy general counsel, Luke Goodrich, pointed out: "The pharmacists...willingly refer patients to over 30 pharmacies that stock the morning-after pill within a 5 mile radius, and no patient has ever been denied timely access to any drug." In other words no woman has been stopped from aborting her child. And yet the state was not satisfied.

In recent years Christians involved in any sort of wedding-related businesses who don't want to take place in same-sex ceremonies have seen their business targeted. But homosexuals aren't the only ones coming after us – abortion advocates also want to put Christians out of business. That why it's important to consider now, before pressure is brought to bear, what God wants you in your business life to do and not do.

SOURCE: Gene Johnson's "Ruling: Washington can require pharmacies to dispense Plan B" posted to www.SeattleTimes.com July 23, 2015 and update July 24.

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IN DEFENSE OF BIBLICAL SPANKING

by Rob Slane

Why would anyone want to write an article defending spanking? This is one of those topics which the modern world considers a fundamental sign of whether you are a civilised person or a barbarian, and I probably don't need to tell you which side of the line advocates of spanking are thought to fall on.

There is some justification in this. We've probably all seen or heard examples of "spanking" which have been quite simply dreadful: the drunken father who whacks his children with a strap; the frustrated mother who lashes out in anger in the supermarket. Let me make it clear at the outset that I am not defending any of those types of spanking. In fact, I am as much against them as anyone from the anti-spanking lobby.

What I am defending, however, is Biblical spanking, which I believe is as far from the types mentioned above as East is from West.

THE RIGHT THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Any defence of Biblical spanking ought to start not with spanking itself, but with the whole issue being put in the right theological framework. John Calvin famously started his *Institutes* with the following statement: "Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves." So where do we go to get this knowledge? The answer is that we go back to the book of origins, the book of Genesis.

What do we find there? Firstly, we find a good God who creates all things well, and crowns his world by making Man, who is His very image, and placing him in a garden. As for Man, he is Very Good, holy and righteous.

But what about their relationship? Is it only servant to master? Or something else as well? I mention this because I think

that some Christians go askew at this point, and it affects their whole reading of the rest of the Bible. Because God puts a prohibition on Adam, many treat the relationship as if God was a judge and Adam on trial. Now whilst it is true that Adam was subject to a prohibition, this is not the primary relationship that was going on there. Luke tells us specifically in his genealogy that Adam was the son of God – not THE son of God, but a son of God nonetheless – and so the prohibition is far more akin to a father telling his child not to touch the electric socket than it is to a judge standing over a man on trial.

Of course what then happens is that Adam disobeys and loses his holiness and his righteousness. He has erred, he is a rebel, and he has gone astray. So God punishes him, right? Well yes, but I don't think we should see the curses as exclusively "punishment." Pure punishment would have seen both Adam and Eve in Sheol there and then, but is this what happens?

Actually, quite the opposite. In the very next verses after the curses are announced (Chapter 3 verses 20-21), both Adam and Eve are restored. Adam calls his wife Eve – mother of the living – which is odd since they have both just been told that they are dead, but the reason he can do this is that God has just promised a saviour, and He has then clothed them to cover their nakedness. So they were saved directly after the curses were announced. In other words, except for God's eternal punishment – which is punishment or retribution in its purest form – God places curses and with them pain not because he wants simply to *punish*, but because he also wants to see *restoration*. C.S. Lewis, in *The Problem of Pain*, describes pain as "God's megaphone to a deaf world" and indeed it is. In a fallen world, the curses are there not simply as a means of punishing, but also as a means of grace in

bringing people back to God (or to put it another way, nobody ever turned to God after winning the lottery).

WE NEED TO SEE CLEARLY

Why is it important to establish all this in a defense of spanking? It is because spanking is under attack from a worldview that is incapable of seeing spanking as anything other than punishment. In the eyes of the humanist, who sees no ultimate authority over humanity, adults have no right to spank their children – who are in any case fundamentally good – and so spanking can only be seen by such people in terms of abuse of authority and as pure punishment. Sadly, I think a lot of Christians buy this. However, this misses the fundamental point of why spanking (Biblical spanking that is) is necessary. God's curse on Man was in part a Judge's ruling meting out punishment, but it was also a Father seeking to lead His children to restoration. So too we, as fathers, should use spanking to lead our child to repentance and restoration.

If we start from the position set out in Genesis, we come to a very different conclusion than the humanist one. We realise that our children have sinful, not pure hearts, that they do wrong and need correction. But we also come to see that if we are to spank, we do so not out of anger or a need for retribution, but from a position of love and with the purpose of bringing our children to repentance and restoration.

USING THE ROD

But why the use of the rod? Well the short answer is that the book of Proverbs tells us that in many places. Yet we must approach this book with the same fundamental starting point as we have discussed above. If we just dive into the "spanking verses," the temptation will be to just see "use the rod" "use the rod" "use the rod"

If we just dive into the "spanking verses," the temptation will be to just see "use the rod" "use the rod" "use the rod", which is likely to lead us to a very harsh type of spanking...



Discipline vs. Punishment

by Jon Dykstra

Both punishment and discipline are painful, but that pain is put to very different purposes by God. God disciplines us in love, as a means of correcting us (Heb. 12:11, Prov. 3:11-12, Rev. 3:19, etc. etc.). His punishment, however, is a matter of justice, meted out on those who He hates – it is sinners getting their due.

This distinction between discipline and punishment is an important one to understand when it comes to spanking. Spanking should be discipline and not merely punishment. And to be discipline it must be administered in love. So when our oldest boy belts his little sister, he has a spanking coming to him, but not to return blow for blow – this isn't about justice. Instead this is about teaching him to recognize the seriousness of his sin, and teaching him to stay away from it.

That's why a parent must never spank in anger. To do so is to confuse (in our own hearts, and in our children's perception) the purpose of this spanking. Was it intended as loving correction? It will hardly seem so when administered by a shouting parent – a child doesn't need to be all that perceptive to spot the difference between angry vengeance and loving discipline.

So let us spank, but to the right end.

“use the rod”, which is likely to lead us to a very harsh type of spanking, where our purpose is simply punishment and retribution.

But what is the book of Proverbs? It is a father talking to his son, imparting wisdom for life. And how does he do this? Go and read the first few chapters. He is not harsh. He is not judgemental. Rather he is full of love for his son and desperate to see his son do right. And so by the time we come to the “spanking verses” it is clear that what is in the father's mind is not using the rod to punish, but rather as a means of discipleship, a means of correction, and above all a means of

... it is loving correction to steer them away from harmful, destructive and unrighteous ways of living.

restoring the child.


Get this wrong, and we end up with a harsh, cold view of spanking, and I agree 100% with the humanists that this has no place in a civilised society. But get these basics right – those seen in Genesis, and those seen in Proverbs – and we suddenly see that spanking is actually a means of grace to our children – yes it may also be a punishment for wrongdoing, but more than that it is loving correction to steer them away from harmful, destructive and unrighteous ways of living.

CONCLUSION

I want to finish up this piece just setting down ten principles, which I think are really practical applications flowing out of what has been discussed above:

1. We should only ever spank for offenses where the child has been told clearly that this type of

behaviour is wrong.

2. We should never administer it in anger, but always in a calm and loving way. A helpful way of achieving this is to always go into a different room than the one the offense took place in. This gives both parent and child a chance to calm down, and it also ensures that the child is not humiliated in front of others.
3. We should always begin by explaining to the child what they've done wrong and why it was wrong.
4. The child should be given the right to reply to these charges, and if there are real doubts as to whether they have done the wrong they are accused of, we should refrain from smacking. “Better that the guilty go free than that the innocent are condemned,” as the saying goes.
5. Spanking should be done on the bottom only and must be done swiftly.
6. It should always be followed by a prayer of confession in which the child seeks God's forgiveness, and this should be followed by the parent assuring the child that if their repentance is sincere, God's forgiveness is free, full, and unconditional.
7. If we lost our tempers in any of this, we should confess both to God and to the child as well, seeking their forgiveness.
8. We should assure the child of our unconditional forgiveness and love, and further assure them that they are restored to fellowship with the rest of the family.
9. If their sin involved others, we should get them to go and seek their forgiveness.
10. The whole thing should be carried out in a spirit and atmosphere of love for the child, with the aim of bringing them to repentance and restoration of fellowship with their family. 



DIFFERENT IS GOOD!

GOD CREATED MALES AND FEMALES TO BE VERY DIFFERENT

by Michael Wagner

God created males and females to be very different from each other. That's obvious to us as Christians and to most other clear-thinking people. But to leftwing ideologues who see any recognition of difference as "inequality," accepting such difference is a form of heresy.

For example, many feminists consider any difference between males and females to be the result of "social conditioning" – the two genders are only different, they say, because our "patriarchal" society imposes differing expectations on boys and girls. And

once the government and its education system have properly imposed "equality" on society, then the differences between men and women will disappear.

LEONARD SAX

In recent years, that ideological perspective has been thoroughly refuted by scientific studies of the human body. Many of these studies and their implications are summarized by psychologist and medical doctor Leonard Sax in the book *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know about the Emerging Science*

of Sex Differences.

Sax is not coming to this issue from any sort of Christian or social conservative perspective. He is not opposed to homosexual behavior, and as a medical doctor he prescribes birth control to sixteen-year-old girls without their parents' knowledge. In other words, he is not a believer, or a conservative as such. He is simply frustrated by the harmful effects of leftwing ideology on children.

When Sax was trained at university, most professors accepted the ideological view that male and female differences are

socially conditioned rather than being natural and intrinsic. He refers to this view as

the dogma of “social constructionism,” the belief that differences between girls and boys derive exclusively from social expectations with no input from biology.

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER?

After practicing medicine for a few years, he suddenly saw a huge increase in the number of grade 2 and 3 boys being sent to him with notes from their teachers saying they have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and needed medication. This glut of supposedly ADD boys alerted Sax to the fact that something was wrong. As it turns out, it wasn't that the boys were ill or needed medication. It turned out that boys have a different sort of learning style than girls, and that the current method of teaching in many schools favors the female learning style. When boys have a hard time paying attention in class they are diagnosed as having ADD and given drugs to cope with that “problem.” But in most cases these boys don't actually have a problem. They're just not being taught the way boys need to be taught. As Sax summarizes the situation, “The failure to recognize and respect sex differences in

...rather than receiving a spanking, “these kids are instead being put on calming behavior-modifying drugs such as Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta, and Metadate.”

child development has done substantial harm over the past thirty years.”

The brains of male and female humans have significant differences, especially during infancy and childhood. These differences affect the way children learn and thus are relevant when considering how they should be educated.

GIRLS DRAW NOUNS, BOYS DRAW VERBS

Take the eye, for example. Baby girls are naturally interested in looking at faces while baby boys are more interested in looking at moving objects. According to Sax, “The reason for that difference has to do with sex differences in the anatomy of the eye.”

The anatomy of the eye is different for males and females. It is impossible for the differences to be the result of social conditioning. And these differences are significant. Sax says that,

We're not talking about small differences between the sexes, with lots of overlap. We're talking about large differences between the sexes, with no overlap at all.

Such biological differences between boys and girls are reflected in a number of ways. For example, when boys and girls are given paper and crayons to draw with, the difference reflects itself in the kinds of pictures that result. Boys tend to portray movement and action more than girls. “Psychologist Donna Tuman summarizes the difference this way: girls draw nouns, boys draw verbs.”

TOYS

In feminist ideology, boys and girls play with different kinds of toys because their parents give them the kinds of toys they are expected to play with. Boys get “boy toys” like balls, trains, and cars, while girls get “girl toys” like dolls, and baby carriages. The feminists argue that if the boys were given girl toys, and the girls given boy toys, the children would turn out differently – the boys would express more femininity in their play and the girls would express more masculinity in their play.

But the actual research done on children as young as nine-months-old demonstrates that boys naturally gravitate to boy toys and girls to girl toys. Their respective interest in those kinds of toys is natural, not the result of social conditioning. The feminists are wrong again.

This is how Sax summarizes the overall situation:

Girls and boys play differently. They learn differently. They fight differently. They see the world differently. They hear differently. When I started graduate school in 1980, most psychologists were insisting that those differences came about because parents raised girls and boys in different ways. Today we know that the truth is the other way around: parents raise girls and boys differently because girls and boys are so different from birth. Girls and boys behave differently because their brains are wired differently.

This is a point that bears repeating: “The bottom line is that the brain is just organized *differently* in females and males.” And the organization of the brain is not something that can be conditioned by a “patriarchal” society.

DANGER AND VIOLENCE

Sax discusses a number of other ways that boys and girls differ. One of the most interesting is their reaction to danger. Generally speaking, when a girl is confronted by danger she feels fearful. But in many cases a boy confronted with the same danger will experience a thrill. Boys often seek out dangerous activities for fun. This is less common in girls. Sax notes that, “Studies in the United States and around the world universally find that boys are more likely to engage in physically risky activities.” Boys often get enjoyment from activities that most girls want to avoid.

Boys are also less adverse to violence than girls. Much like the situation with danger, “many young boys get a thrill from violent or quasi-violent confrontation. Most young girls don't.”

This fact has educational implications because it affects the kind of literature that will interest most boys:

Boys as young as two years of age, given a choice between violent fairy tales and warm and fuzzy fairy tales, usually choose the violent stories. Girls as young as two years of age consistently choose the warm and fuzzy stories.

DISCIPLINE AND SPANKING

Sax has a long discussion on how girls and boys need different kinds of discipline. In his view, boys tend to need strict authoritarian discipline, which includes spanking. However, he does not believe girls respond positively to spanking and advises parents not to spank girls. This differs from the Christian view since girls are not exempt from spanking in the Bible.

However, because he does recommend spanking for boys, he spends some time defending spanking as a legitimate form of discipline. He refutes the argument that spanking leads to child abuse saying,

Parents who love their young son and spank him only occasionally when he does something really outrageous are at no more risk of becoming child abusers than are parents who never spank.

He also points out that some countries have outlawed spanking and doing so has not decreased child abuse at all.

Sweden, for example, passed a law in 1979 making it illegal for parents to spank their children. But a Swedish government study conducted in 1995 showed a fourfold *increase* in child abuse in the years following passage of the law. Of course, that doesn't mean that the law somehow caused an

increase in child abuse. But it certainly provides no support for the theory that outlawing spanking will decrease child abuse

Sax makes another very valuable point. Children have not changed in the last few decades. They still misbehave. How is that misbehavior dealt with? In the "olden days" children were spanked. Now, rather than receiving a spanking, "these kids are instead being put on calming behavior-modifying drugs such as Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta, and Metadate."

Sax points out the hypocrisy of this current state of affairs: "In a bizarre turn of events, it's become politically incorrect to spank your child, but it's okay to drug him." This situation is tied to a larger philosophical change. As Sax describes it,

Fifty years ago, bad behavior was considered a *disciplinary* problem. If you misbehaved, you needed to be punished. Today bad behavior is more often considered a *psychiatric* problem. Kids who misbehave are referred to a specialist for a diagnosis – and for treatment, often with medication.

SPANKING AND HUMAN NATURE

There is an important aspect to the debate over spanking that Sax understands much better than most people. At the root of this dispute is a difference over human nature. Are humans naturally sinful or naturally good? If children are born sinful, then it stands to reason that force will be needed to direct them into positive behavior patterns. But if children are naturally good rather than sinful, then corporal punishment is never necessary. Other forms of correction are assumed to be superior and preferable.

If children are born good, as the

currently dominant worldview believes, then bad behavior must be the result of bad parenting, poor nutrition, ADD, violent entertainment, or something like that. Spanking can't solve any of those problems because they're not the children's fault. Instead, the children need some sort of medical treatment to deal with their misbehavior.

But as Christians we know that children are born with sinful natures. They are not born good. Thus spanking will always be needed as a form of discipline for children.

The current effort to criminalize spanking is a direct attack on the Christian doctrine of original sin. The opponents of spanking do not believe in original sin and therefore reject its implications for child discipline. Instead, they want to impose their preferred methods of child-raising (based on the assumed natural goodness of children) through government coercion.


CONCLUSION

Sax summarizes his message this way:

Human nature is gendered to the core. Work *with* your child's nature, work with your child's innate gender-based propensities, rather than trying to reshape them according to the dictates of late-twentieth-century political correctness.

Recognizing these gender differences and taking them into account in child-raising and education is best for everyone involved, especially the children themselves.

The idea that gender differences are instilled by a patriarchal society, and can be eliminated by imposing an egalitarian society, is simply a feminist ideological fantasy. It has no basis in reality. And the efforts that are taken to enforce this fantasy are harmful to the children who become its victims.

God deliberately made males and females to be very different from each other. As the French say, "vive la difference!" 

The current effort to criminalize spanking is a direct attack on the Christian doctrine of original sin.



FOR DADS: **Tender Love**

by Tim Bayly

When one of our children was in first grade, we had a parent-teacher conference and were told by his teacher that he had a problem obeying. He attended a Christian school we had helped start and we believed in Christian education partly because we wanted our children's teachers to tell us where they saw un-Christian behavior, which is to say sin. At the time, my wife,

Mary Lee, was principal of the school and we both knew this teacher pretty well, so we acted on her helpful report of our failure as Dad and Mom by forging an agreement with her concerning the future. The agreement was that, from that day on, each day she would send a report home with our son showing whether he had disobeyed her that day, and if so, how many times he had disobeyed. And

we also agreed there would be a zero-tolerance regime for a time: if he had even one mark on the paper indicating he had disobeyed even once during the day, he would be spanked.

The next day, Mary Lee came to the church office directly from school, bringing our son into my office for his first spanking. His teacher had given him I can't remember how many marks for



Discipline without tenderness is intolerable and will drive our sons and daughters to exasperation...

disobedience and, reminding him of our warning that morning, that any time he had even one mark on the paper, he would get a spanking, I took him over my knee and spanked him. Then I encouraged him to come home tomorrow without any marks at all and he wouldn't have to get a spanking.

The next day, again, Mary Lee came straight to the office with our son and I spanked him again.

The next day, again. And the next and the next and the next—for about twenty straight days. The church secretary and other pastors came to cringe when they saw Mary Lee bringing our son into the office around 3:30 each day. We believe in private discipline, but after a week or so, it was hard to hide what was going on behind the closed door of the conference room. Everyone was rooting for our son to start obeying his teacher carefully enough that she would not put even one mark on his paper.

Then one day his paper had no marks, and our son announced to his mother—not to his father who was doing all the hard work, mind you, but his mother—that he had decided he would give her no spankings as a Mother's Day gift! And we stopped getting papers with marks on them.

You think that's the end of the story, but it's not. My point is not the spankings, but something else.

In the next couple weeks, I prided myself on being a consistent father who had stepped in and done what was needed to turn our son into an obedient child. I comforted myself that it was fine if my son credited his love for his mother and the occasion of Mother's Day with his change of behavior, but I knew the truth. His teacher, his mother, and I had all worked together and I had done the manly part of the job by whacking him hard on his bottom with my hand

each day, and rebuking him for his disobedience, exhorting him to new obedience following each spanking. It was hard work to accept his teacher's rebuke of our failure as parents – every child's sin reported by his teacher is a stinging rebuke to his parents felt quite deeply, and not only had we submitted our parenting to his teacher, but we had carried through with the discipline until it bore its desired fruit. And surely this was what God used to change his heart, and therefore his behavior. I had not a doubt in my mind about that.

But then a doubt arose. Was it really his teacher's caring exhortation combined with his mother and father's resolve in discipline; was that what caused him to change?

A thought came to me. Hadn't something else significant happened to me concerning my son, and about at the same time as the parent-teacher conference when we got the bad news?

Sometime after the spankings first began, I had been working at the copier in the church office one day, when I had found myself standing next to the wife of an elder who was working at the counter next to the copier. We exchanged pleasantries and then, sotto voce and talking to the wall, I heard her say, "I think Taylor needs more time with his Daddy." That was all and it came out of nowhere.

I looked at her across my left shoulder and she glanced at me, lifting her eyebrows but not saying another word. And again, I was thankful to God for the rebuke of a mother in Israel of my failures as a father. After that I had started to spend more time with my son.

And now, thinking this all through, all of a sudden it seemed clear to me that I had been talking with and listening to my son, looking into his eyes, sympathizing and empathizing

with him in a disciplined way ever since that church mother had rebuked me. I had been tender with him. And that, I thought, was at least as much the cause of our son's newfound obedience as was our discipline.

All of our work with our sons and daughters – especially our discipline – must come in the context of tenderness. Discipline without tenderness is intolerable and will drive our sons and daughters to exasperation, bitterness, sarcasm, cynicism, and despair. You must not do that, and to protect against it you must spend more time with your sons and daughters. And more time doesn't mean sitting in front of the computer screen or television with them. It means time listening and sympathizing and empathizing with them. It means holding them in your arms and scratching their back and tussling their hair and wrestling with them on the floor. It means taking walks with them and asking them what they're looking forward to, and if it's something you promised you would do with them, it means doing what you promised, and not delaying it.

Whenever I think of the tenderness of God's love I recall this description of God's fatherhood toward us:

Like as a father pitieth his children,
so the LORD pitieth them that fear
him. For he knoweth our frame; he
remembereth that we are dust.

When the strong man takes into account the weakness of those he loves, dealing with them gently, his is a tender love. When the mother covers the ears of her nursing infant, sheltering him from the cracks and booms of the Fourth of July fireworks show, she shows a tender love. When the teenager holds the hand of his younger sister as they cross the busy street, his love is tender. When the

husband comforts his wife at the grave of their infant son, his love is tender.

Tenderness is taking into account another's limitations and weaknesses, speaking and acting in such a way as to protect her from dangers and harm. Synonyms for tenderness include sympathy, kindness, gentleness, compassion, warm-heartedness, and fatherliness.

In this spirit, the Christian husband is commanded to love his wife with tenderness:

You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. (1 Peter 3:7)

Concerning our children, fathers are commanded, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger" (Ephesians 6:4) and "do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart" (Colossians 3:21). You see the theme?

Fathers are to love their wives and children with tenderness. We are to take into account the weakness of our wives

since they are the "weaker vessel" and tend toward "fear" (1 Peter 3:6-7). We are to take into account the weakness of our children since they tend toward anger and losing heart in their relationships with their fathers.

A tender husband does not make fun of his wife's weaknesses or fears. He doesn't dwell on failures that are the result of her weakness, as if each of those failures is the result of a lack of submission or respect for her husband. He doesn't ask her to lift the other side of the refrigerator with him or crawl under the lawn mower with him. He doesn't ask her to be the one to call and hassle with the cable company over the increase in the bill. He doesn't ask her to picket the abortuary so he doesn't have to leave work. He doesn't ask her to write the letter to the pastor asking him to shore up the Biblical integrity of the sermon. He doesn't spend all the family's money and demand she work to keep them solvent. He doesn't leave her alone among pagans at the dinner table of the family reunion while he goes to the bedroom and reads a book. He doesn't tell her if she doesn't like their twenty-year-old son playing video games all day, she can tell him that herself. He doesn't demand sexual intimacy during that time

of the month or late in pregnancy.

A tender father does not make fun of his child's ignorance. He doesn't berate his son for not knowing which way to turn the screwdriver. He doesn't demand that his son not cry when he gets hurt badly. He knows the difference between his son disobeying because he's immature and weak and lacks understanding and his son disobeying because he's rebellious. He helps his son with his homework. He prays for his son when he finds this or that class to be difficult to pass. He plays tennis with his son even though he spends three-quarters of the time chasing the ball outside the fence around the tennis courts. He doesn't hassle his daughter about being too heavy or too skinny. He doesn't demonstrate fear or alarm when his daughter has no suitors. He doesn't tell his daughter she's only good for marriage and child rearing, and so he's not going to spend money on her education. He doesn't allow his daughter to wear anything she likes, nor does he leave the issue with his wife, depending upon her to know and enforce the boundaries of feminine modesty.

A tender father lives with his wife and sons and daughters in an understanding way. He tells his wife that if he had ten thousand lives to live, he'd spend every one of them with her. And he means it.

His greatest compliment to his son is not that he's "a chip off the old block," but rather that he's faithful, courageous, and a hard worker. His greatest compliment to his daughter is not that she's tougher and brighter than any boy, but rather that she's beautiful in appearance and heart, she's cultivated a gentle and quiet spirit that God will not despise; that she has wisdom beyond her years; and that she will make the perfect wife and mother.

And even though he has five daughters and says this to each of them, he is always telling the truth. **RP**

Tim Bayly serves as senior pastor of Clearnote Church in Bloomington, IN. He and his wife, Mary Lee, have five children and twenty grandchildren. This article is an excerpt from Tim's forthcoming book on fatherhood (Clearnote Press 2016), and first appeared in The Warhorn (Vol. 3, Iss. 2).



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{ IN A TIDBITS RELEVANT, AND NOT SO, } { NUTSHELL } BY JON DYKSTRA

C.S. LEWIS ON THE DANGER OF INDULGING IN "OUTRAGE PORN"

The term "outrage porn" was coined by a New York Times writer, Tim Kreider to describe the way our culture seemed addicted to seek out things to be offended by. More than 60 years ago in his book *Mere Christianity* C.S. Lewis offered up his own assessment on this tendency in us.

Suppose one reads a story of filthy atrocities in the paper. Then suppose that something turns up suggesting that the story might not be quite true, or not quite so bad as it was made out. Is one's first feeling, "Thank God, even they aren't quite so bad as that," or is it a feeling of disappointment, and even a determination to cling to the first story for the sheer pleasure of thinking your enemies as bad as possible? If it is the second then it is, I am afraid, the first step in a process which, if followed to the end, will make us into devils. You see, one is beginning to wish that black was a little blacker. If we give that wish its head, later on we shall wish to see grey as black, and then to see white itself as black. Finally, we shall insist on seeing everything - God and our friends and ourselves included - as bad, and not be able to stop doing it: we shall be fixed for ever in a universe of pure hatred.

GAY RIGHTS ARE NOT CIVIL RIGHTS

"...the gay revolution is not the successor of the civil rights movement of the 1960s; it is the successor of the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Getting a grasp on this, we get a grasp on where our culture is really headed, helping us recognize that our embrace of homosexuality (even the more committed, less promiscuous kind) is part of our larger descent into sexual anarchy."

- Michael Brown, in *Outlasting the Gay Revolution*

FREE BOOK / NEW BLOG

A free pdf version of Rev. Peter Holtvluwer's book *Foundations: Sermons on Genesis 1-3* is now available at the new blog CreationWithoutCompromise.com under the "Books" tab at the top. This blog has been started by Rev. J. Witteveen, Dr. W. Bredenhof, Dr. T. Van Raalte and myself to help those struggling with the issue of Man's origin and its importance to the Christians faith. As Rev. Witteveen writes,

Our plan is to address the issue, and to do so with an unapologetic and firmly held starting point: the Bible is God's perfect word, and our interpretation of the evidence provided by the sciences must be entirely shaped by it.

So check out the blog and download the book!

BEST PRO-LIFE SLOGAN EVER

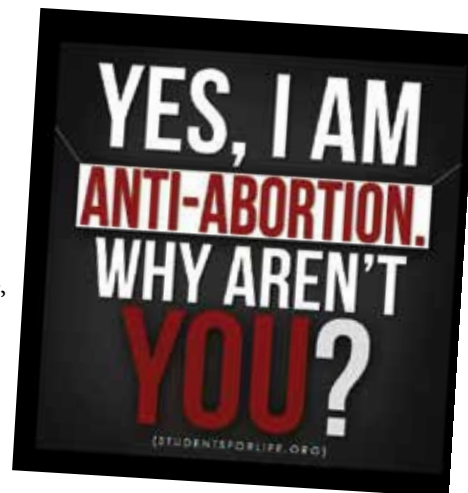
In defending the unborn it's important we not be defensive. Ours is not some regrettable, embarrassing position; it's the obvious one. And we need to act like that, making it clear for all who are confused that the only sane position is to be against killing babies.

Too often we're scared to defend the unborn. What if someone who's had an abortion reads our pro-life shirt and starts yelling at us? What if someone sees our pro-life bumpersticker and just goes off on us? Though the other side is defending the indefensible we let them go on the offensive, screaming us into silence.

We need to set this debate aright putting the baby-killers in their proper place: the defendant's bench. This slogan "Yes, I'm anti-abortion. Why aren't you?" crafted by Students for Life does just that, first making it clear that of course we're against killing babies, and then demanding an accounting from those who hold the pro-death position. What possible reason could anyone give to justify killing babies?

Abortion is a great and obvious evil. This is the way we need to talk.

SOURCE: First spotted this logo on Douglas Wilson's blog dougswills.com



ON CAMPAIGN PROMISES

"The politician's promises of yesterday are the taxes of today."

- Mackenzie King

"The politician's promises of today are his taxes of tomorrow."

- Jon Dykstra

MORE MENSA JOKES

- What do you get when you cross a joke with a rhetorical question?
- A photon was going through airport security when security asked him if he had any luggage. The photon replied, "No, I'm traveling light."
- A German walks into a bar and ask for a martini. "Dry?" inquires the bartender. "Nein," the German replies, "just one."

SOURCE: Andy Simmon's "25 Jokes that make you sound like a genius" in the Sept. 2014 issue of *Reader's Digest*

ARE YOU FOR GOD OR RU-486?

A brief history of a
deadly drug that's been
approved in Canada

BY CHRISTINE FARENHORST



When animals die it can be distressing. When I was about twelve years old, my cat died and I remember being pretty heartbroken about that (but my parents were kind enough to let me choose another kitten from a neighbor's litter). I've also been sad about the death of a little guinea pig, the demise of several dogs and the end of a peacock.

But there was something disturbing about the black headlines in recent newspapers describing the death of Cecil, a lion who was shot, allegedly illegally, by an American dentist in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe. The international outrage over the shooting of this lion is incredible. That is not to say that a lion is not a beautiful

creature and Cecil, in particular, was a powerful, majestic looking animal. But that's the key. Animal he was, and animal he will remain in death.

There has been, to my knowledge, no international outrage over other deaths - the deaths of the unborn. According to research conducted by the Guttmacher Institute 42 million abortions occur globally each year and about 100,000 of these happen in Canada. Data from Statistics Canada (2004) states that there is one abortion for every four live births in Canada.

ABORTION IS NOT NEW

Throughout the course of history, babies have frequently been victims of murder. Forms of abortion and

infanticide have always been present in past civilizations. George Grant, in his very worthwhile book, *The Quick and the Dead*, (Crossway, 1991) lists a number of them. Greeks often gave their pregnant women harsh doses of herbal abortifacients. Persians developed highly sophisticated surgical curette procedures. Chinese women tied heavy ropes around their waists so excruciatingly tight that they either aborted or passed into unconsciousness. Ancient Hindus and Arabs concocted chemical pessaries - abortifacients that were pushed or pumped directly into the womb through the birth canal. Egyptians disposed of their unwanted children by disemboweling and dismembering

them shortly after birth. Their collagen was then ritually harvested for the manufacture of cosmetic cream. And so on and so on, right into the last decade of the twentieth century.

There is no human reason why this century should be different. Man is, after all, sinful - prone by nature to hate God and his neighbor.

There is no need to question whether or not God approves or disapproves of such activities. One need only read Leviticus 20:1-5 (where God prescribes death for anyone who sacrifices a child to Molech) to understand just how dreadfully God disapproves of anyone who kills his child. In this same passage God condemns any who stand by and simply ignores these murders. Such a thing, God says in that chapter, without mincing any words, defiles His sanctuary and profanes His holy Name.

Between 1969 and 1988, Canadian law stated that abortions could be performed in a hospital if a committee of doctors decided that continuing the pregnancy could endanger the mother's life or health. Access to abortions varied across the country.

However on January 28, 1988 - 27 years ago - the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the country's legislation against abortion infringed on rights set out by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They struck down this law. Canada is at this time one of a small number of countries without any law restricting abortion. An abortion is now treated like any other medical procedure and is governed by provincial and medical regulations.

THE INVENTOR OF OVERPOPULATION HYSTERIA

In 1766, Thomas Malthus was born. The youngest of eight children, he had a cleft palate. Although he struggled with a speech impediment, this seems not to have deterred young Thomas. He graduated from College with flying colors, winning prizes for declamations in Latin, Greek and English. Very gifted in many areas, he particularly enjoyed

mathematics, but opted to become a clergyman - a minister of the Word - accepting a curacy in Albury, England.

Although Thomas was a clergyman, and presumably well-versed in God's Word, he had some strange perceptions about the Bible. He neither believed in hell, nor in the fact that man was totally sinful. He did preach that evil existed in the world and that it was the duty of every individual to remove evil from himself and from others as much as he could. If a person pursued this goal throughout life, he would improve his mind and do the will of his Creator.

Thomas, during the course of his clergyman's duties, continued to study math and his mathematical pursuits and theories convinced him, (and many others of his time), that the world was facing a population crisis because too many babies were being born. According to his human calculations, the world would, at some time in the future, be facing a poverty and hunger situation. He concluded that if human beings were to survive, men would have to be sacrificed. The specific human beings who would have to be sacrificed (or eliminated) included the poor, the mentally handicapped and others.

Thomas died in 1834. His theory, however, did not die with him. People who subscribe to it, or agree with his way of thinking, are called Malthusians.

THE INVENTOR OF RU-486

Etienne-Emile Blum was born in 1926 in France. His parents were Jewish. His childhood was relatively happy until the Second World War broke out and France was overrun by the Nazis. Because it was extremely dangerous to be Jewish at that time, the family fled to the south of France and, in 1942, Leon Blum, Etienne's father, changed the family name to Baulieu. Etienne was a teenager by this time. Full of zeal and hatred for the Nazis, he joined the *Francs-Tireurs et Partisans Francais* - a resistance group controlled by the Communists. He was involved in much vandalism and read a great deal

Throughout the course of history, babies have frequently been victims of murder.

of Communistic literature.

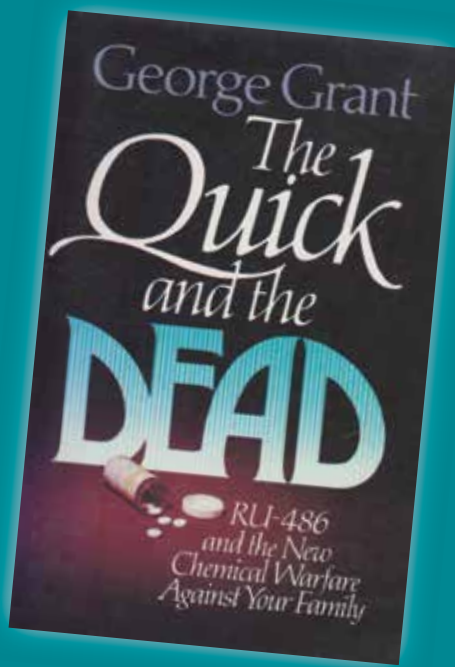
After the war, the Communists encouraged young Etienne Blum, now Baulieu, to become a doctor. He went to medical school and became very interested in birth control. Etienne was opposed to Christianity. He had to be. To be a dyed-in-the-wool Communist, a denial of an Almighty Creator God was required. He became a Malthusian, citing concern over rising populations as one of the reasons he was in birth control research. He made it his specialty and began working on pills - contraceptive pills - pills that caused abortion.

There are many abortifacients, (drugs or other agents used to cause abortion). Etienne Baulieu came up with one called RU-486. It is a drug that can induce a menstrual period after the implantation of a fertilized egg in the uterus, and can terminate a woman's pregnancy in its earliest stages. "I resent it when people present the very early interruption of pregnancy as killing a baby, morally or physically," Baulieu said, "I think it's a crime to say that."

The manufacturer of Baulieu's pill was the French company Groupe Roussel-Uclaf, a subsidiary of the West German pharmaceutical company Hoechst. The pill was originally labeled ZK 95.890, which turned into Roussel-Uclaf 38486, which became RU-486 for short. Hoechst earns many millions in sales annually.

DIFFERENT NAME, SAME AIM

It is not very well known that Hoechst, the company which



George Grant, the author of *The Quick and the Dead*, has his own pro-life blog at ppgi.blogspot.com where you can also read his book online.

manufactured RU-486, was not always known by that particular name. Before and during World War II, it was called I.G. Farben. I.G. Farben was the company that manufactured a cyanide gas – a gas also called Zyklon-B. Now that might not ring a bell, but this was the gas used to exterminate the Jews in Nazi concentration camps.

In 1942, Dr. Leon Blum, Etienne's father, had changed the family name to Baulieu so that the members of his family would be safer – so that presumably they would escape the dangers of the extermination camps. What would he have thought to have seen his son working for the company which manufactured the poisonous gas which had murdered his fellow countrymen? Even as I. G. Farben stated that Zyklon-B made it easier and less painful to kill Jews, so Hoechst touted that RU-486 made it easier to terminate pregnancies.

It is interesting to note that the French government formally authorized distribution of this pill in 1988. It is even more interesting to note that the French government owned 36.25 percent of Roussel-Uclaf's stock.

TWO VICTIMS

Although it was published almost two decades ago, George Grant's book on RU-486 is still very pertinent and very informative today. At the outset of this book, *The Quick and the Dead*, he relates the story of an American student who participated in a foreign studies program in France. She was not wealthy but was quite happy to be on her own in an attic apartment in Paris. Making a number of bohemian friends, she, unfortunately, began to neglect her studies and, of course, fell in love. When pregnancy resulted, her male friend gave her some money, and some brochures on abortion, and disappeared out of her life.

The girl, whose name was Meredith, read the brochures. One of them contained information

about the drug RU-486 or Mifegyne. "Safe," "easy," and "do-it-yourself" were some of the words that imprinted on her frightened brain. She set up an appointment at the advertised address and, subsequently, had to submit to a psychological analysis. Next was a session with a family planning counselor. But the planning only consisted of signing a liability release form and an insurance waiver. A week later, after signing two more documents, Meredith received three small pills. Under the supervision of a midwife she swallowed them and was told to go home and wait for the abortive bleeding to begin in 48 hours.

Meredith waited but the bleeding did not begin. She returned to the clinic after the 48 hours had elapsed and was given some prostaglandin, a labor-inducing drug. She began contractions, but there was still no bleeding. Sent back to her attic apartment, she felt nauseous, had diarrhea, vomited and was dizzy. Three miserable days later she finally crawled to a phone down the hall and called for ambulance. The paramedics found her unconscious in a pool of blood.

At the hospital a surgical D&C and suction procedure was performed right

away. There was internal hemorrhaging and a transfusion was given. Meredith's lungs began to fill with fluid and she was put on a respirator. Her kidneys were strained and she was also attached to a renal filter. The level of toxicity in her blood was high and her heartbeat became very irregular. But Meredith lived. God spared her life and He also permitted her to come into contact with a Christian maternal help center after her release from the hospital.

That is as much of the story of Meredith as George Grant relates in his book. But there is more information about RU-486.

SPREADING AROUND THE WORLD

Baulieu and other researchers felt confident that RU-486 would prevent any newly conceived child from becoming attached to the womb. They expected the child to die and wash out of the uterus in an artificially produced menses. However, pregnancies were more durable than the researchers expected. Initially RU-486 merely damaged the uterus or child – that is to say, it would kill the child but not expel him. Very often only the administration of a labor-inducing drug, such as prostaglandin, would remove the dead child.

In the beginning, when the French government formally authorized procedures for the distribution of RU-486, a written warning was included about the many possible risks and complications to the women who took it. Hoechst advertised it widely and began a nationwide giveaway promotion for the drug, distributing it to some twenty thousand women. The first confirmed death connected with RU-486 was reported by the French Health Ministry in May 1991. During that same period Baulieu was in Canada speaking to the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League saying that the drug would soon be approved for second and third trimester abortions. New reports of other possible deaths caused by RU-486 came to light, (disabilities, comas and cardiac arrests). These were

all downplayed by the media, most of whom are pro-abortion. And that same summer, the summer of 1991, RU-486 was approved for consumer use in Britain and three Scandinavian countries.

RU-486 was approved in the US in 2000 and is presently available in more than 57 countries. It was recently also approved for use by Health Canada. A Canadian woman can now take a pill at the doctor's office, go home and take four more pills within twelve to twenty-four hours. Then she is advised to return to her doctor within one or two weeks for a follow-up visit. Both obstetricians and family doctors will be able to prescribe RU-486.

The truth is that there are many potentially dangerous side effects for women who use RU-486. Its chemical composition is similar to diethylstilbestrol which caused reproductive malformation and sterility in the female children of the women who take it. Reportedly 95.5% effective, the impact it has on the 4.5% babies it does not kill is that it often severely deforms them. Then there is the psychological trauma. When a woman cramps and bleeds, she delivers a tiny baby into her own hands and she will recognize that this is life – life that she has killed.

WORLDVIEW BIAS

In October 1981 the Rothman-Lichter survey brought to light that more than 90% of newsmen today are personally pro-abortion. According to Grant, newsmen invariably take the easy way out, using news releases from pro-abortion lobbyists and publicists, simply adding their byline. Back in 1991 he noted that:

A survey of more than 200 published articles in magazines, newspapers, and periodicals in Great Britain and America over the past year revealed that only 22 mentioned the serious complications and side effects caused by RU-486, only nineteen quoted pro-life sources or experts, and a mere 9 conveyed any negative connotations whatsoever.

Only a Biblical worldview can give us solutions to the problems that beset mankind. Grant offers a number of activities which can be done by the grass-roots. His suggestions include informing people as much as we can on the facts about RU-486, (and other abortifacients), holding officials accountable for their words and deeds, exercising wise consumer stewardship, (boycotting all Roussel-Uclaf and Hoechst products), and remaining informed.

A QUIETER KILLING

We know all about the holocaust of the Second World War, but it seems easy for us to forget there is a holocaust going on today.

God hates all the wickedness which the ideas of Malthus and Beaulieu have generated – past, present and future. Yet we should not neglect to pray for people who hold these terribly erroneous views. John Sartelle, in an article entitled 'Prayers Well Aimed' (May 2009 issue of *Table Talk*) writes:

Several years ago a member of the church I was serving came to me concerned about a friend of his who had a serious cancer. He said "John, I feel awful. When my friend told me he had cancer I cried. I don't want him to die. However, this is not why I feel so terrible. I only became concerned about him when cancer had been discovered in his body. For years we have been friends and I have known

he was not a Christian. He has always said he was an agnostic. In all that time I have never really prayed for his salvation. I had not been concerned even though he had something wrong with him that was much worse than cancer."

Do you know what was wrong with that church member? The same thing that is wrong with you and me when we see a friend spiritually perishing and have little or no concern. The problem is with our own spiritual condition... Some of us struggle with actually verbalizing the Gospel to our neighbors and fellow workers. We say we are not "gifted" in such evangelism. But there can be no excuse for failing to pray for our lost neighbors. That is something all of us can do. Many Christians and churches pray. However, their prayers are not always aimed at the vision, advancement and growth of the Kingdom of God. Are your prayers well aimed?

In other words, pray with zeal and regularity for the Morgentalers, the Beaulieus, the news people and columnists in your area, the judges on the Supreme Court, the atheistic politicians, and the misinformed and opinionated neighbors on your street and in your town – that their eyes may be opened and that their souls might be saved. RP

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Optically Excellent

How could evolution craft something as complex as the eye in the first place?

And how could it do it again and again?

by Margaret Helder

Everybody knows that our eyes are wonderfully designed, even those who don't acknowledge their Designer. All the parts are special and each is important for vision.

SO MANY PARTS

The bulging cornea consists of clear material that not only lets light penetrate, but bends it toward the pupil.

The iris consists of a thin circular

muscle which acts like a camera diaphragm, controlling the size of the pupil opening. The iris expands or contracts the pupil opening in order to control the amount of light entering the eye.

Behind the pupil is the lens which focuses light onto the retina (composed of light sensitive cells and nerve cells). The lens is a particularly important component of the eye. This oval shaped

object is made up of water soluble proteins, many of which are very large molecules. These proteins are tightly packed together in such a way that they are not only transparent, but they bend the light so that the rays are focused into a sharp point. This provides a clear image. Ideally the lens focuses on the retina (the receiver), but if the focal point is in front of the retina (or behind it) then corrective lenses are

required to adjust the focus onto the retina (ie. you'll need glasses!). It is also most important that the proteins in the lens retain their special tightly packed arrangement, otherwise the lens becomes opaque thereby disturbing vision.

The other particularly important component of the eye is the retina. It consists of certain receiver cells which contain light sensitive pigments called rhodopsins. These are composed of a form of vitamin A and a large protein molecule called opsin. Different precisely shaped opsins are sensitive to specific wavelengths of light. In humans there are opsin molecules sensitive to blue light, or to green light or to red light. Cones are cells which contain one or other of the specific colour sensitive opsins. Other cells called rods are sensitive only to more or less light. These rods and cones point backward to the back lining of the eye, but the light is coming from the front direction.

Before the light gets to the rods and cones, it passes through the nerve cells which lie on top of the light sensitive cells, between them and the incoming light. Some people suggest that this is backward wiring – they say the nerve cells should have gone *behind* the rods and cones for a more efficient arrangement of parts. But what do they know? Others suggest that having the nerve cells in front, lying on top of the rods and cones, protects these sensitive tissues from getting too much light.

When light is sensed an electrical pulse is generated by the rods and cones and conducted by the nerve cells to the optic nerve and to the brain. The brain, for its part, puts the electrical signals together into images which are communicated to the person's consciousness.

There are other important components of the camera eye too, like the dark choroid layer lining the inner eyeball, which prevents light rays from scattering inside the eye, and jelly-like material which allows the eye to keep its shape. When we consider the special properties of all these component parts, we have to conclude that the camera eye is indeed a wonderful organ.

OTHER EYES

Among living creatures there are other eye designs as well. Some single-celled animals and even some much larger creatures make do with mere concentrations of light sensitive proteins or clusters of pigmented cells. In the many-celled animals, these are often associated with nerve cells. Some animals feature recessed eyespots to better focus the light. Creatures with jointed outside skeletons (exoskeletons) like insects, crustaceans, spiders, millipedes etc., are famous for their composite eyes. These bulbous structures are made up of many tiny eyes all of which focus on a central point. While these eyes are very good at detecting motion, they probably do not have the same sharp focus as the camera eye.

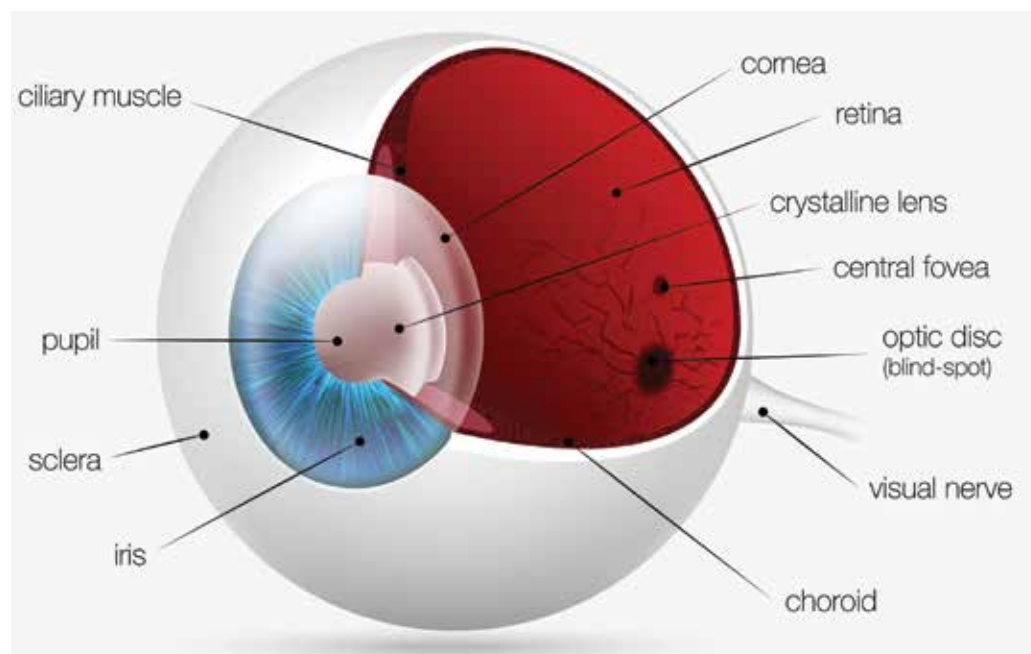
Before we become too proud of our fancy eye design however, let us reflect on a biological riddle. It sounds like the beginning of a joke, but it isn't one and it's not funny, not even mildly amusing. I can well imagine the groans from you the reader when asked, "What does a

... all these creatures share a common design in the eye!

single-celled animal, a highly poisonous jellyfish, a bristly marine worm, an octopus and a fish or dog all have in common?"

The question seems so totally meaningless! What could a single-celled animal and a dog have in common beyond the obvious characteristics all animals share? The surprising answer is that all these creatures share a common design in the eye!

Now, most of us have likely heard that all creatures with backbones (vertebrates) enjoy "camera-style eyes." But what about a jellyfish, octopus and a single-celled animal which closely resembles algae that cause toxic red tides in the sea? Do they have camera-style eyes too? Yes, yes and yes!



The stunning complexity of our eyes is a problem for evolutionists – how could something of such intricate design come about by an unguided process? But it gets worse. Not only are our eyes spectacular, they're not that unique – animals like the octopus and box jellyfish, which evolutionists concede have no evolutionary connections to us, share a similar eye design with us. In other words, not only did our amazing eye have to beat incredible odds to come about by chance once, it had to happen again and again.

OCTOPUS AND SQUID

Octopus and squid are perhaps the best-known animals without a backbone (invertebrates) that enjoy the benefits of a camera-style eye. We have all seen pictures of these creatures with their large eyes. Octopi are particularly intelligent, some say as intelligent as a housecat. (Our cat Velvet is not so sure about that! In any case maybe the octopi are smarter!) Be that as it may, octopi make very good use of their eyes as they navigate their environment and catch food.

The term cephalopod means brainy foot and it denotes a subgroup of mollusks which include squid and octopus. The cephalopod camera-type eye includes an iris, circular lens, gel filling the eyeball, pigment cells and photoreceptor cells that send an electrical signal to the optic nerve which is connected to the brain. In the case of the cephalopods, the light sensitive rods and cones are in front of the nerve cells (not behind as in vertebrates). Moreover the crystal proteins in the cephalopod lens act the same way as our lens does, but the proteins are not the same.

Since cephalopods have a body design (plan) that is radically different from that of vertebrates, and since the chemical components of the eye are different, not even mainstream scientists see any kind of evolutionary connection between us and the octopus.

UNDERWATER WORMS

We are all familiar with earthworms. Most of us have handled earthworms in the garden or as fishing bait. These creatures have a complete digestive tract with a mouth at one end and an anus at the other end. They have strong muscles and a few projecting bristles, but no obvious sense organs although they react strongly to odours and the drying effects of light. This body plan possessed by a group called the annelids, does not seem promising for fancy sense organs.

However there are marine annelids called polychaetes (meaning many bristles) which lead more vigorous lifestyles. Among the polychaetes is an obscure group called alciopids. These are

slender swimming creatures with conspicuous eyes. They actively pursue and catch prey. Most surprisingly, the eyes of these worms are camera-style eyes complete with cornea, lens and retina. And like cephalopods, the wiring of the retina features the light sensitive cells first with the transmitting nerve cells behind. Obviously there is nothing in the body plan of these annelids that is at all similar to vertebrates. So nobody imagines that there is a shared evolutionary history between the two groups. So where did the fancy plan for these eyes come from?

BOX JELLYFISH

As we move next to jellyfish consider this: these marine annelids don't have much that could be called a brain, but they do at least have some small concentrations of nerve cells at the front end of their body. If there is going to be any interpretation of the images detected by the fancy eye, it would be in this "brain."

Jellyfish however have no central nervous tissue (which could function as some sort of brain). These creatures therefore do not look like promising candidates for any benefit from camera-style eyes. As one famous paper on eye origins declared: "one would expect most lens eyes to be useless to their bearers without advanced neural processing [brain power]." (D.-E. Nilsson and S. Pelger. 1994. *Proceedings: Biological Sciences*, 256 (1345) p. 58)

Nevertheless box jellyfish do indeed possess camera-style eyes. Another commentator called attention to the surprising occurrence of this eye design in any creature with a jellyfish body plan. Thus Rudiger Wehner declared:

– a box jellyfish or cubomedusa – is equipped with eight surprisingly sophisticated lens eyes of the camera-type, but there is no common brain behind them. In nearly every respect,

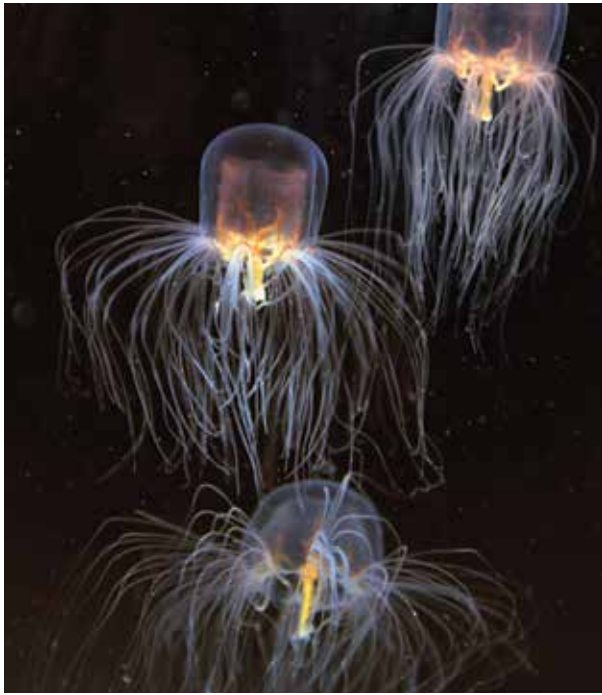


They don't have bones like us, but they do have eyes like us.

these lens eyes resemble those of animals such as fish or cephalopods, but the "central nervous system" behind the eyes consists only of a diffuse nerve net accompanied by a marginal nerve ring. (*Nature* 435 (7039) May 12, 2005 p. 157)

In general jellyfish drift or swim in the open sea in such a way that their trailing tentacles occasionally encounter suitable prey. Specially designed stinging cells entangle and kill the prey and the tentacles pull the victim to a central opening that serves both as the mouth and anus. However, the box jellyfish have a different lifestyle. They actively hunt prey in shallow water habitats like mangrove swamps which are full of obstructions like tree roots.

Despite the unexpected nature of the box jellyfish sensory organs, expert Dan Nilsson and his team insist: "All major components of a typical camera-type eye are present: a cornea, a lens, a retina, a pigment layer and an iris" (*Nature* 435 (7039) May 12, 2005 p. 202). Not only do the jellyfish eyes have all the appropriate parts, but it transpires that the jellyfish lens produces a very sharp focus. We know from the fancy way special proteins are arranged to form a lens that good lenses require precise specifications. Dr. Nilsson and team declare that such lenses



Box Jellyfish have 24 very small eyes (too small to be seen here) but no brain!

are not only rarely encountered among the variety of animal body plans, but the jellyfish lenses are unique by virtue of special proteins:

From the unique crystalline proteins we know that at least the lenses have evolved independently in box jellyfish. Making good lenses seems to be a demanding task because only a few animal phyla have accomplished it (p. 202).

Despite the sharp focus of the jellyfish lens, the retina is positioned too close so that a blurred image results. Nilsson and colleagues however suggest that the eyes are "'purposely' underfocused" (p. 202) so that the creature is not confused by too much detail. The lack of brain may also suit the lifestyle of this animal as commentator Rudiger Wehner reports:

...as the outputs of the eyes are channelled directly into the pacemakers for the swimming movements, and as the pacemakers are also located in the sensory clubs, a visuomotor processing occurs at an extremely peripheral level.... during the course of evolution, box jellyfish have clearly not had the need to feed the information provided by their total of 24 eyes into a central processing

unit, or brain (p. 159).

In its body plan the box jellyfish is completely unlike other animals with camera-style eyes which typically possess some sort of central brain. In its body plan a jellyfish exhibits minimal body parts, but in the case of the box jellyfish we also see a sensory organ which follows a precise sophisticated blueprint. The great differences with other creatures of similar eye design mean that no evolutionary relationship is imagined between eye-possessing box jellyfish, polychaete worms, octopi and vertebrates. It was in

some other way that they came to possess the fancy eye blueprint.

WARNOWIID DINOFLAGELLATES

If camera style eyes in a jellyfish are unexpected, how weird would it be to see the same design in a single-celled animal? A recent article in *Nature* communicated the astounding news that there are some single celled protozoans that have a sensory structure "so complex that it was initially mistaken for a multicellular eye" (523 (7559) July 9, 2015 p. 204). The component parts include a cornea, lens, iris and retina. It is these parts, which, declares Gregory Gavelis and colleagues "so resemble the camera-type eye of some animals that they have been speculated to be homologous [related through evolutionary descent]" (p. 204).

Warnowiid dinoflagellates are very rare and unusual marine organisms. Their cell design is like the algae that cause toxic red tides in oceans. These dense concentrations of algae can kill fish and render shellfish (which consume the algae) poisonous to people. All dinoflagellates have two grooves in their exterior shape. One is like a shallow waistline and the other is a vertical groove in the lower half of the cell. Within each groove lies a thread-like flagellum or thread-like structure which

moves in wave-like fashion to produce motion.

Most other dinoflagellates are dark brown and these photosynthetic pigments allow them to manufacture their own food. The warnowiid dinoflagellates however are colourless and need to consume food. Presumably these cells use their ocelloid (eye-like structure) to catch suitable prey.

Commenting on the dinoflagellate study (which came from University of British Columbia), commentators Thomas Richards and Suely Gomes rhapsodize: "evolution has stumbled on similar solutions to perceiving light time and time again" (*Nature* July 9. 2015 p. 167).

DIFFERENT BODIES, SAME EYES

In the course of this survey of creatures with camera-style eyes we have observed that (apart from vertebrates), the possessors are rare specimens from diverse body plans. Obviously there was no line of descent linking them all – these creatures are too different to even contemplate such an idea, and everybody agrees on that. Instead mainstream scientists contemplate the separate surprising appearance of the same blueprint/design for an eye in wildly different organisms by means of an unguided evolutionary processes. In the cases that we have discussed, the lifestyles are not even remotely similar, so it would be surprising to see similar solutions, especially through chance processes.

Other people (like us) conclude that a conscious choice was made to confer the same design feature on these diverse creatures. What we see is common design (conscious choice by the Creator) rather than descent with change from a single ancestral population (common descent) or separate spontaneous appearances in diverse creatures. God can bestow what features He likes on whatever creatures He so desires. There does not have to be a pattern or a reason why these creatures are the way that they are. When we see these examples as the work of God, our appreciation of the creation becomes much more profound. RP

REVIEWS

THE VERY BEST NEW RELEASES

LIVING WATERS

DOCUMENTARY
69 MIN. / 2015



This is one part nature documentary and one part evolutionary take-down. Illustra Media understands that a great way to expose evolution is to take a close in-depth look at some of the creatures that God has made. In Darwin's day scientists didn't have the ability to look inside the cell, and only had a glimmering of how incredibly complex even the simplest living creatures are. Now we know so much more – it turns out that even the simplest cell in our body has astonishingly complex and coordinated inner workings. Some have compared the complexity of a cell to the complexity of an entire city!

In other words, the more we know, the more apparent it is that evolution can't be so.

In previous films Illustra Media took a close look at butterflies (*Metamorphosis*) and birds (*Flight*). This time they have turned their attention to four maritime creatures: dolphins, sea turtles, Pacific salmon, and humpback whales.

Time doesn't allow a full detailing of just how awe-inspiring this investigation is. But I'll give you a small sampling of what the documentary shares about the complexity of dolphins. These creatures that can distinguish between a ping pong ball and a golf ball via echo-location. This is a form of sonar, and better than anything man has ever constructed. The dolphin's sonar system can spot fish up to six inches under the sand and can find a BB at the bottom of a swimming pool.

Dolphins also have a complex air return system which allows them to make the high frequency sounds they need for echo-location by blowing air past two sets of "phonic lips" and then recoup that air and redirect it back to its lungs. This air return system allows it re-use this air and to echo-locate for more than ten minutes without needing to surface for air.

This is only scratching the surface of the dolphin's complexity but this is already enough to expose the impossibility of evolution. The dolphin is able to:

1. make the sonic sound
2. focus and direct it
3. receive it
4. and, finally, have the ability to interpret and understand the signal they are getting back

All four of these elements are needed or else the system won't work at all. So how could evolution – random mutation and natural selection – be responsible? The idea that all four elements evolved to be at the very same time is beyond fantastic. So too is the idea that they would evolve one after another and be selected for, despite having no function (despite having no evolutionary advantage) until all four are finally developed and the whole system is up and running. Evolution simply can't account for systems such as this, which are so obviously and clearly designed.

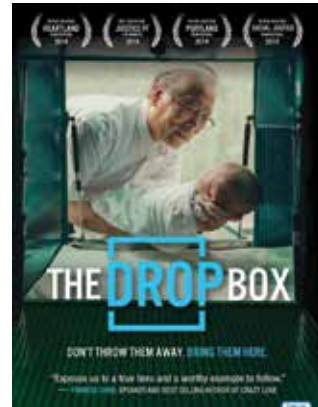
Living waters is a remarkable documentary with wonderful visuals of all the creatures discussed. My pre-school children weren't able to follow the discussion, but the close-up videos and computer animations kept their attention. Meanwhile their mom and I were stunned by the sheer brilliance and creativity of God!

I should note that while mention is made of an Intelligent Designer, He is never specifically named as the God of the Bible. That is disappointing, but every Christian watching this will most certainly give God glory. I can't recommend it enough – this is an amazing look at some seemingly simple but incredibly complex creatures.

– JON DYKSTRA

THE DROP BOX

DOCUMENTARY
79 MIN. / 2014



A bell chimes and Pastor Lee Jong-rak hurries past shelves of baby supplies to the drop box at the front of his house. He opens its door and finds yet another baby. Carefully he carries it back to the warmth of the living quarters, unwraps it, and prays, "Thank you, God, for saving this baby's life."

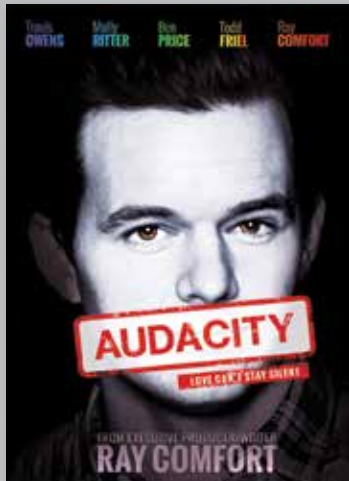
Hundreds of babies, many of them handicapped, have been left in that drop box instead of being abandoned on the streets of Seoul, Korea. This documentary showcases them, as well as Pastor Lee's own severely handicapped son who was used by God to show his parents that each life is valuable. Because of him, Pastor Lee and his wife have dedicated their lives to saving unwanted babies.

Despite controversy he has also adopted many of them, saying, "The reason I decided to become their father is because God has adopted me."

Although neither the cinematography nor the subtitling are flawless, *The Drop Box* powerfully promotes the Biblical message that the unwanted and disabled need compassionate care, not killing. I have watched it three times and believe it will encourage all who protect human life, whether through prayer, political action, or practical care.

While the content is too intense for young viewers, a children's audio drama adaptation is available from Focus on the Family.

– ANNIE KATE AARNOUTSE



AUDACITY: LOVE CAN'T STAY SILENT

DRAMA

50 MIN, / 2015

I used to think the main flaw with Christian movies is that so many of them are simply sermons disguised as dramas. But I've recently realized that the problem with these dramas wasn't that they were sermons but rather that they were *bad* sermons... and paired with bad acting and worse writing.

But in *Audacity* Executive Producer Ray Comfort has done something different. This is still a message movie – it's for Christians about why we need to, and how we can, spread the Gospel to homosexuals – but one in which pretty good writing and pretty good acting have been paired with an absolutely fantastic sermon. The result is something every Christian needs to see.

The story begins in a typical office setting. When attractive Diana aggressively challenges bike messenger Peter to defend his biblical beliefs about gay marriage he heads to the Internet to do research. How can he present the truth winsomely?

Fortunately Peter finds YouTube videos from street evangelist Ray Comfort in which homosexuals are interviewed and challenged, and yet seem to appreciate the exchange. How does Comfort pull it off? By focusing on what we all have in common: our sinful tendency towards sexual perversion. Peter watches as Comfort asks several people whether they think people are "born gay." Most answer yes, including one baseball cap wearing lady.

COMFORT: "Are people born that way?"

LADY: "I believe so. I was."

COMFORT: "Do you think people are born with tendencies to commit adultery?"

LADY: "Hmmm....I don't believe so."

COMFORT: "What about to fornicate?"

LADY: "Nope."

COMFORT "I was born with those tendencies... Everyone is born with a desire to do what we want to do even if we know that it's wrong. I know adultery is wrong and fornication is wrong but I still wanted to do it. I was born like that – couldn't help it. The desires overtook me. But it doesn't make it right. Does that make sense?"

LADY: "It does make sense."

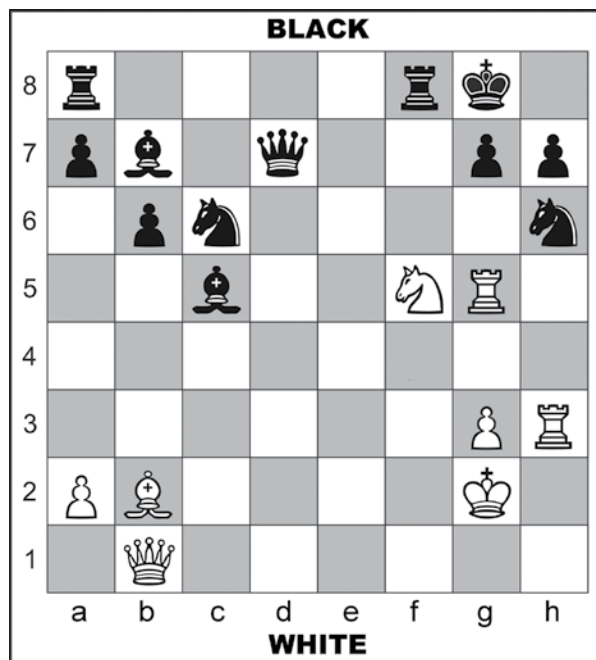
Just that quick, Comfort shows that the tendencies we are born with can't be our guide to what is right or wrong. His is also an inclusive approach. He doesn't approach homosexuals as someone above or better than them, but rather as someone in a similar situation, also in need of a Savior. And he explains that because he believes the Bible to be true, if he loves his homosexual neighbors then he has to speak up.

In total Comfort's witnessing videos only amount to about 15 minutes in this 50-minute production, but they are the crux around which the whole film revolves. In the dramatic sections we get to see how "everyman" Peter ends up putting into practice what he has learned. It's believable enough that most viewers will be able to imagine themselves in Peter's shoes, and learn right along with him what it means to speak the truth in love.

Homosexuals have recently won a big court battle in the US, and some activists have been persecuting Christians businesses that don't want to participate in same sex ceremonies. So it's only be human nature for us to think of homosexuals as our enemies. But as Comfort shows, that something is a part of human nature is no reason to think it is right. God calls on us to love even our enemies. So we can't stay silent. We need to share what Jesus has done for us, and what he can do for homosexuals too.

To learn how to do it well, consider gathering a few friends together to watch and discuss *Audacity*. It's available for free viewing online at www.audacitymovie.com (starting on August 19) or you can visit the website to buy a DVD for just \$5.

ENTICING ENIGMAS & CEREBRAL CHALLENGES



Riddle for Punsters #224

"Beach Decision"

Jasmine could not decide if her family should go to the beach. It started out to be a sunny day but the weather forecast of an afternoon thunderstorm tended to _____ the issue. The family went anyway and found that the beach was so crowded that there was _____ ing room only.

Problem to Ponder #224

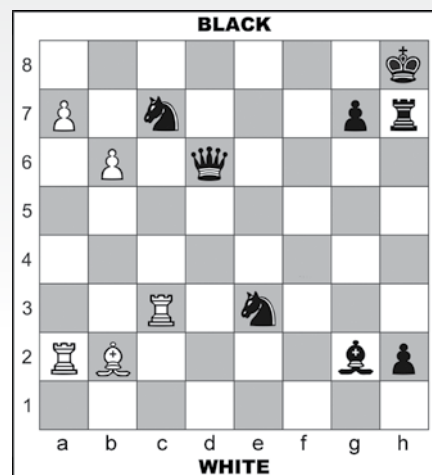
"Water Within Reach, Fun at the Beach"

At Wet-water Beach on a holiday Monday, 30 adults and 56 children had arrived by noon, at which time 20% of the adults and 50% of the children were in the water. Three hours later there were 34 more adults and six times as many children in the water. At that time, 2/5 of the children and 3/5 of the adults were NOT in the water. If an average of four people per vehicle came to the beach, how many vehicles were in the parking lot at 3 p.m.?

Chess Puzzle #224 - WHITE to Mate in 3 Or, If it is BLACK's Move, BLACK to Mate in 3

Last Month's Solutions

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to Puzzle Page, 43
Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 or
robgleach@gmail.com



Solution to Chess Puzzle #223

WHITE TO MATE IN 4

Descriptive Notation

1. P-R8=R ch BxR
2. RxB ch NxR
3. R-B8 ch Q-B1
4. RxQ mate

Algebraic Notation

1. a7-a8=R + Bg2xa8
2. Ra2xa8 + Nc7xa8
3. Rc3-c8 + Qd6-f8
4. Rc8xf8 ++

Answer to Riddle for Punsters

#223 - "Check Webster's Dictionary?"

What kind of widow could also be considered a SPINster?

A black widow spider. Check it out on the World Wide Web

Answer to Problem to Ponder

#223 - "Pizza Puzzle"

At Antonio's Pizza Palace, two rectangular pizzas (15 inch by 10 inch) have a before-tax price of \$23, which includes one topping. Each extra topping adds \$1.50 to the price. A 14 inch diameter round pizza costs \$16.00 but a second one can be bought for half that price. That includes 2 toppings, with an extra cost of \$1.20 for each additional topping. If the tax rate is 16% for take-out pizza, and pizzas are ordered with three toppings, what is the total cost for two rectangular pizzas? Would two round pizzas cost less? What is the cost (including tax) per square inch of pizza for rectangular and for round pizza with three toppings? (NOTE that the area of a circle is $A=\pi r^2$, about 3.1416 times the square of the radius).

Two rectangular pizzas with 3 toppings cost $\$23 + 2(\$1.50) = \$26.00$ before tax so $\$26.00 \times 1.16 = \text{\$30.16 including tax.}$

Two circular pizzas with 3 toppings cost $\$16 + \$1.20 + (1/2)\$17.20 = \$17.20 + \$8.60$ before tax so $\$25.80 \times 1.16 = \text{\$29.93 including tax, so 23 cents less.}$

The 2 rectangular pizzas have $2(15 \times 10) = 300$ square inches so cost $\$30.16 / 300 = \text{10.1 cents per sq.in.}$ whereas the circular pizzas have radius $14/2 = 7$ inches so area $2(\pi r^2) = 2(3.1416)(7)(7) = 307.8768$ square inches so cost $\$29.93 / 307.8768 = \text{9.7 cents per sq.in., slightly less than the rectangular pizzas.}$

BLACK TO MATE IN 4

Descriptive Notation

1. ----- Q-N5 ch
2. R-N3 N-B5 ch
3. K-B2 Q-Q7 ch
4. K-N1 P-R8=Q mate

IF

1. ----- Q-N5 ch
2. R-N3 N-B5 ch

3. K-R1 P-R8=Q ch
4. R-N1 QxR mate

Algebraic Notation

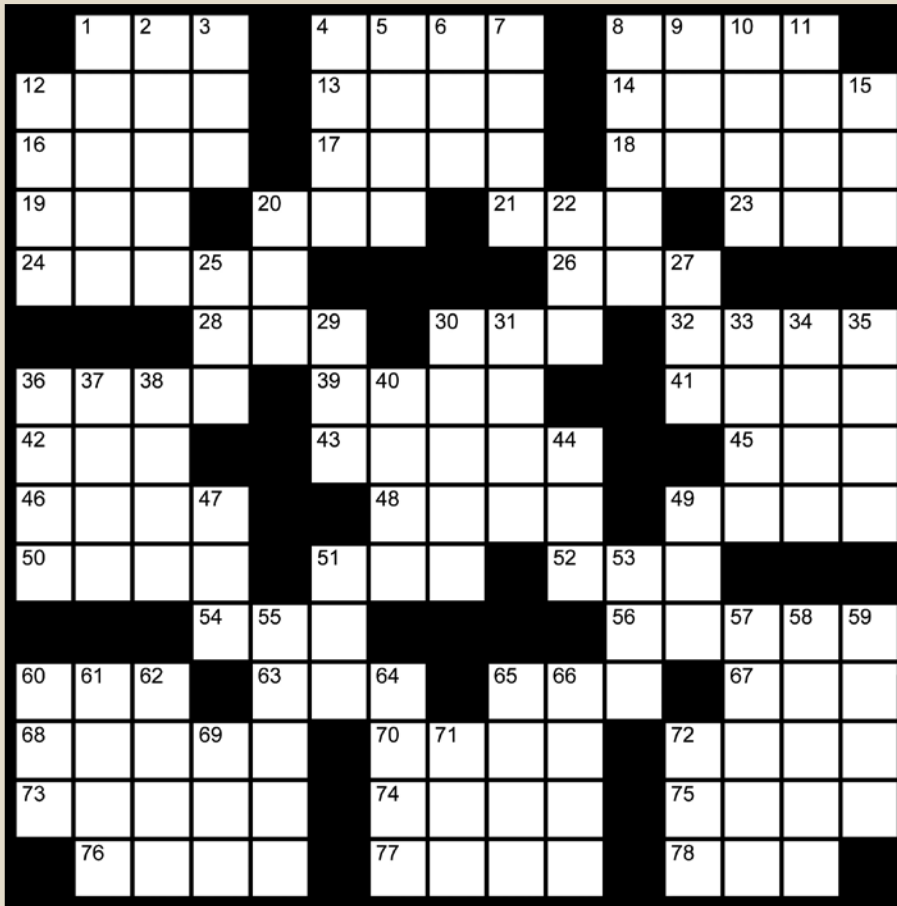
1. ----- Qd6-b4 +
2. Rc3-b3 Ne3-c4 +
3. Kb2-c2 Qb4-d2 +
4. Kc2-b1 h2-h1=Q ++

IF

1. ----- Qd6-b4 +
2. Rc3-b3 Ne3-c4 +
3. Kb2-a1 h2-h1=Q +
4. Rb3-b1 Qh1(OR Qb4)xb1 ++

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

BY JEFF DYKSTRA



SERIES 2-1

PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

1. "_____ gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." (Gen. 3)
4. How much you should pick of pickled peppers
8. Healing substance from plant of the same name
12. Greek goddess of youth
13. Short form for *incoming* facts *for* you
14. It's often wild in playing cards.
16. "The sun rose _____ him..." (Gen. 32)
17. Engrave into metal, especially by using acid
18. Trigger fingers may be this in westerns
19. Edge of a container
20. Abbreviation for a group of physicians
21. Brand of jeans
23. Weeding tool
24. Off limits, forbidden, unspeakable
26. "come, _____ and eat!" (Is. 55)

28. Necklace made of flowers
30. Fishing line float (used by Robert?)
32. Too; as well as; in addition to
36. Title given to prominent Englishwomen
39. "I have done as you _____ me" (Gen. 27)
41. Largest city and capital of Ukraine
42. "....still yield fruit in old _____" (Ps. 92)
43. Salesperson's or advertiser's speech
45. "Before" in poetry (and found in there?)
46. "no human... can _____ the tongue." (James 3)
48. Gas station name found in Canada, but not U.S.
49. Person who uses (especially computers)
50. Answer to *length x height*
51. Cooling systems (abbr.)
52. High, rocky hill (found in Toronto?)

54. "...money for the king's _____" (Neh. 5)
56. Measurement at a corner (part of a triangle?)
60. Playing card just before 14 across
63. Vigor and vim whipped up at a _____ rally
65. Movable bed (found in a cottage?)
67. Feel sick
68. Governing body in Roman Catholic church
70. Run _____ (to act without restraint)
72. News story; request on shopping or to-do list
73. Singing part in a choir
74. "...Jerusalem... a _____ of jackals;" (Jer. 9)
75. French for *we* (but there is no us?)
76. Car damage (coming in an accident?)
77. Bird that mimics human speech
78. Creative work (found in the heart?)

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION



SERIES 1-11

DOWN

1. Overall tone of old (or old-fashioned) photos
2. The biggest explosive ever built
3. It's *not odd* that it's getting dark, *poetically* put.
4. Ship's parking space
5. Tolkien's heroic tree-shepherds
6. Abbr. for banned ozone-destroyer
7. Former German Chancellor Helmut _____
8. French farewell
9. "_____ there be light?" (Gen. 1)
10. It pains me to say this!
11. Say again? again?
12. Johnny Cash song, or synonym for "injured"
15. "....the log in your own _____?" (Luke 6)
20. A deer, female
22. "Every flow has its _____" (French proverb)
25. Bullfighting cry
27. Animal used for milk in the Himalayas
29. Possessive pronoun for animals, not people
30. Fools think that ignorance is _____
31. Poems in praise of, usually, the natural world
33. The devil is the father of _____ (John 8)
34. Scorched; dried out; arid (all describing land)
35. "I have made him lord _____ you," (Gen. 27)
36. Another word (not short form) for 13 Across

37. Substance used to grow bacteria
38. Suddenly popular idea spread by social media
40. Middle East oil producers group (abbr.)
44. Abraham's nephew in Sodom (Gen. 13)
47. "...gave me this scroll to _____" (Eze. 3)
49. Container for manna in tabernacle (Heb. 9)
51. "He will cut down... with an _____" (Is. 10)
53. Cereal crop used in cereals and horse feed
55. "...has set _____ the godly..." (Ps. 4)
57. Large reptile (with first name Allie?)
58. Abbreviation for military rank
59. Urban trees (that sounds like help for poor?)
60. "....do not _____ so wickedly" (Gen. 19)
61. Set up someone's line (in drama)
62. Sea eagle
64. Elim had seventy of this tree. (Ex. 15)
65. "Show me the _____ for the tax." (Matt. 22)
66. Popular vegetable in the southern U.S.
69. "Am _____ now?" "If you're charged up for it!"
71. "_____ God... grant you mercy..." (Gen. 43)
72. _____ *Nutshell* (regular feature in this magazine)

IF YOU HAD 3 SECONDS AND 200 SQ. FEET TO CHANGE THE WORLD. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

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