

# FAMILY TIMES

A Home-school Newsletter for New Testament Christians  
Edited by Bev & Dave Hewitt and Karen & Dave Pratte



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## FAMILY MEALS ONCE A WEEK?

Kent E. Heaton Sr.

In a recent television commercial on the NBC network, a man is sitting on a dining table giving advice to parents. The problem was how to find a way to talk with the kids. The solution: sit down at least ONCE a week with the family for a meal so that parents can talk with their kids.

I will admit it rather shocked me to think that we have become so busy in our lives that we have to make plans to sit down together as a family for one meal a week. This trend may be the reason the home is in such trouble as it is - and so is our nation. We live in a fast paced society that many refer to as the "rat race" - only the rats are winning. With our jobs, recreation, school, and television taking so much of our time away from the family element, the children of our world are becoming "latch-key kids of the heart."

The most precious time we have with our children is the life of our children. What other time are we going to have to spend with them than the present? What value is there in searching for the fame and riches of tomorrow when our children are being neglected today? Yes, we are busy about many things but God so made children and the family element that it takes real time to nurture each other. The time spent together must be spent in creating a relationship of trust, love and respect. Children need to be able to spend hours with their parents during the week in sharing their lives. Parents need to be able to spend hours with their children during the week in sharing their lives with them as well.

God realized this need as he spoke to the Hebrew children in the Old Testament: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deuteronomy 11:18,19) Notice the time spent with the children: sitting, walking, lying, rising. It takes more than what people like to refer to as "quality time" to sit, walk, lie and rise. Children do not need 30 minutes a day ("quality time") of their parents - they need their parents' time to sit with them and to walk with them and to lie with them and to rise with them. Children will talk more freely with their parents when they know their parents love them enough to spend time with them.

The dinner table is one of the best places to talk with our children. But when we can only sit down to a meal once a week, our family has deteriorated. How many days a week do you sit down for a meal in front of the TV? Let me share another commercial on TV: a man is shown coming home as his son is playing basketball on the drive. The announcer says that the man and his son used to spend time together but they have grown apart. The man in the car begins to pull out a large box. Inside the box is a satellite dish and the commercial ends with the father and son reunited together once again as a family - in front of the TV. Is there something wrong with this picture? YES - sitting in front of the TV is not how we share our lives with our children. The television is destroying more family togetherness than any other invention made by man when we believe we can have a quality family life - sitting in front of it, gulping our food. We need to wake up, fathers and mothers! If you are having problems with your children listening to you it could be they have the volume turned up too loud on the TV!

For the sake of your family, spend real time with your children. If the only time you can sit together is once a week around the dinner table, you will lose your children. It takes more time than that. What can you give in exchange for the time spent with your children: a TV program, a job, a dream? Nothing can give us more joy than having our children hug us around the neck and say, "Thanks, Dad, for spending time with me ... Thanks, Mom, for caring enough to listen to me."

### A FANTASTIC NEW BOOK

*America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, edited by William Federer  
FAME Pub. Inc., 820 S. MacArthur Blvd., Suite 105-220, Coppell, TX 75019-4214.

Lonnie Garrison recently gave me a copy of this superb book. It consists entirely of quotations from famous people who respect the Bible as being the Word of God, most of them from the history of our own country.

I have heard for years, as you probably have also, that historically our country has not been antagonistic to Bible believers, but the founders of the nation were men of faith who respected and encouraged religion. In fact, I have heard that the founders did not intend to remove religion from government, and they certainly did not intend to establish a humanistic government that would remove religious influence from all public forums. They welcomed religious influence in government and encouraged it. They just did not want a single denomination as the established religion of the nation.

The value of this book is that it proves beyond a doubt what these great men of history really did believe and intend. It will thrill you to read their views. Many of these quotes could not even be READ in a modern public school, let alone could a modern politician openly defend them. Yet the ideas were not only openly defended, they were encouraged and adopted as accepted public policy.

I intend to give you a quote to illustrate the value of the book, then in future issues of F.T. I hope to give other quotes. I urge you to buy this book from the address above or from your local religious bookstore. Try this quote on for size:

"Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with gratitude their obligation to Him for benefits received and to implore such further blessing as they stand in need of ...

"It is therefore highly recommended to the legislative or executive powers of these United States ...

"That with one heart and one voice the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their Divine Benefactor; and that together with their sincere acknowledgments and offerings, they may join the penitent confession of their manifold sins, whereby they had forfeited every favour, and their humble and earnest supplication that it may please God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance ...

"That it may please Him ... to take school and seminaries of education, so necessary for cultivating the principles of true liberty, virtue and piety, under His nurturing hand, and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consisteth 'in righteous, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.'"

— An official proclamation passed by the Continental Congress, 11/1/1777 (via AMGC, p. 147).

### FIRST ANNUAL FAMILY TIMES NATIONAL HOME SCHOOL CONVENTION (HEH, HEH)!

— I.e., An Informal Meeting of Home Schoolers at the F.C. Lectures!

OK, so it can hardly be considered a "convention," but maybe we got your attention anyway. Seriously, we are hoping to have an informal meeting at the Florida College lectures in February so any Christians who are home schooling can meet and get to know one another. This will just be an informal meeting, not intended as an informational or instructional meeting. The lectures are scheduled to be held February 5-8, 1996. You can contact the college for specific lecture topics and for motels where they have arranged for you to make reservations if you want.

As things stand right now, Karen and Dave Pratte hope to attend the lectures, but Hewitts are not planning to due to financial limitations (their daughter Abi is planning to get married this December — enough said?). So Prattes have decided that this first meeting at F.C. would be best if we just obtain a room to meet for an hour or so some afternoon so people who home school can meet and get to know

other home schoolers. Prattes will be there, Lord willing, to informally answer questions, we hope to have a few samples of some of our materials available, and we may have a Florida College representative to answer questions anyone has about F.C. But mostly we will just to meet those of you who can attend, and you can all meet one another.

If you can attend the lectures, just listen for announcements of the room, day, and time for the meeting. Please spread the word to other Christians who home school. We hope to see you there!

### PRESIDENT CALDWELL'S ARTICLE

Elsewhere in this issue is an article by Colly Caldwell, president of Florida College, which we have reproduced (with permission) from the F.C. *Communiqué*. As home schoolers, many of you will conclude, as I have, that the article shows we still have a ways to go in educating our educators.

But I choose to look at the article positively. The whole point of the article is to encourage home schoolers to send their students to Florida College. It is an open invitation and encouragement to us. What are the chances that such an article would have been written ten years ago or even five years ago? The fact is that, while we do have a ways to go, attitudes toward home schooling are rapidly improving.

Those of us who are "old-timers" at home schooling have seen changes that seem incredible in just 10-15 years. We remember when we didn't tell anyone we were home schooling, for fear they would turn us in to the authorities. Now, thanks to the blessings God has given us through the work of the HSLDA, we can openly tell people we are home schooling without fear of government authorities. We remember when you could not buy curriculum guides from A Beka Book, even if your home school was incorporated. Now Beka is knocking on our doors to get our business! Likewise, Florida College used to be skeptical about enrolling home schoolers. Now they are openly "courting" us.

Why are these changes occurring? (1) Because we are a growing share of the education "marketplace." There are more and more of us, just as Colly's article states. When people ignore or reject us, they lose business. (2) The product speaks for itself. People used to believe we "could not do it." We have proved, not only that we can do it, but our kids are generally more spiritual and moral and, yes, academically and socially they are generally just as well prepared, if not better prepared, than kids who attend public schools or private schools. People who have taken a "wait and see" attitude, are now beginning to see!

This has a benefit to all Christians who home school, whether or not you ever send your kids to F.C. I suggest you keep articles like this one by President Caldwell. Next time a member of the church says you can't give your kids an adequate education or that they will never be able to go to college or that they will be social misfits, with a kind spirit show them this article. Here is an article, written by the chief executive officer of the only college operated by brethren who share our views regarding institutionalism and the Social Gospel, and he is openly encouraging home schoolers to send our children to F.C.! If anyone ought to know that we "can't do it," it should be folks like President Caldwell. If he is becoming convinced that we CAN do it, why then should brethren in the local church discourage our efforts?

Yes, we still have a ways to go. But BE PATIENT, fellow pioneers, and keep working. We are arriving at our destination faster than any of us ever thought possible. And the best thing you can do to help bring about change is to do a diligent job of teaching your children!