

FAMILY TIMES

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

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HSLDA – ONE LAST TIME (?)

Many of you have responded to our effort to start a discount support group for the Home School Legal Defense Association. As a result, counting those who have sent in applications and those who have promised to do so, we are within 5 families of achieving our goal. We are almost there! If just five more families join, every family gets to save \$15 every year on their membership fees. If we don't get those five families, then no one gets the savings (at least not through us).

I still suspect that some of you have thought that you might like to join our group, but you have been waiting to send in your application. As mentioned last time, some may be waiting till their HSLDA renewal date. That is a mistake, since you need to join our group **before** your renewal date in order to get the discount when your renewal comes. And you have nothing to lose by joining now. You will not be charged anything to join — *Family Times* does not get any of your money. But when your renewal date comes, you will save money if you are a member of our group.

But I suspect others are waiting just to see whether or not our group succeeds! If we get enough families to start the group, then they will join up. But if we don't get enough families, then they won't bother. What would happen if everyone took that approach? There would be no way we could get enough families to start the group, and everyone would lose.

But if you send in your application, you have absolutely nothing to lose, not even if we don't get enough folks to form a group. I think some folks are afraid they will lose something if they send in their application, but we still don't succeed in forming a group. However, the fact is that if we don't get enough applications, then nothing happens at all to those who sent in their applications! Nothing. Until we get 25 applications, we don't send any of them to HSLDA. Only when we have all 25 do we even contact HSLDA to tell them we are ready to set up a group. Until then, they don't even know about the folks we have applications for. Your relationship to HSLDA continues exactly as it is now until such time as we have all 25 applications. Then and only then do we notify HSLDA that any of you tried to join. In short, it's all or nothing. We either make it, and everyone who sent us their application benefits, or else we don't make it and no one is hurt.

So, you have everything to gain by sending in your application now, and you have nothing to lose. If you haven't sent in your application, please do so soon (the application form is in your September *Family Times* — if you need another copy, please contact us). If you have send in your application, please talk about the discount group to other Christians who home school. If you are not yet members of HSLDA but want to join, contact us and we will tell you how to join. If you want to know more about HSLDA, or if you have any questions at all, write us or email us.

We're almost there. Won't you consider joining and help everyone save some money?

Note: To make room for our state contact list, we have postponed our articles on raising children. Look for the next article in our next issue. Thank you.

HOME - SCHOOL MEETING ABOUT BIBLE MATERIALS

As mentioned in last issue, the *Family Times* editors conducted a meeting for home schoolers at the 1998 Florida College lectures in February. We had a good turnout. At one point I counted about 55 people present, but I am sure there were more altogether, since people were coming and going throughout the meeting. We enjoyed meeting a number of you who are on our mailing list.

The theme of the meeting was teaching the Bible in our home schools. We discussed several approaches and materials that can be used effectively. First, we discussed teaching pre-schoolers and elementary-age students; then we discussed teaching junior high and high-school-age students. We had excellent audience participation, with many good suggestions.

We thought that many of you might want some benefit from the information provided, so we decided to list here the materials that were suggested at the meeting. We cannot record many details, but here is an overview of the materials presented with a few details about some items. Most of these materials are available from religious bookstores operated by brethren. Ones marked with an asterisk are available from Pratte Publications, 841 Hillandale Dr., Antioch, IL 60002 (a little commercial message there ☺).

Materials for pre-schoolers or elementary-age students

Materials suggested by the Hewitts

- 1) *Bible In Pictures For Little Eyes*, by Kenneth Taylor — 2 versions, \$15.99 or \$16.99.
- 2) *Big Thoughts For Little People*, by Kenneth Taylor — \$11.99.
- 3) *Bible-Time Nursery Rhyme Book* — \$14.99.
- 4) *Read & Grow Picture Bible* — \$16.99.
- 5) * *Mrs. Lee's Stories About God's First People* — \$11.95.
- 6) * *Mrs. Lee's Stories About Jesus* — \$11.95.
- 7) * *Rainbow Lessons* (Old Testament and New Testament), Jane Britnell — pre-school & kindergarten - \$6.00 each
- 8) *Eerdman's Bible Stories*

Materials suggested by others

- 1) *The Bible Study Guide for All Ages* (for the whole family, 104 lessons, music tape)
- 2) *Use Your Bible* workbooks
- 3) *Rod and Staff Bible* materials — 1st through 4th grade materials are good and generally accurate.
- 4) *Children's Bible Hour*, (a memory verse, daily program), Box 1, Grand Rapids, MI 49501. The cost is \$1 for two months of devotions.
- 5) *What Did Jesus Do?*
- 6) *Betty Lucas Felt Set* (small set for home use, about \$150)
- 7) *Quiet Pages Booklets*
- 8) *Children's Book of Character Building* — (Little-Brown books?)
- 9) *Book of Virtues*, by Bill Bennett
- 10) *Children's Book of Virtues*, by Bill Bennett
- 11) * *Our Spiritual Heritage*, by Nancy Tumlinson and Jenelle Schoonover (see our note elsewhere in this issue of *Family Times*, and look for a review in our next issue).
- 12) *Wisdom & the Miller's* — a study of the Proverbs, available from Dwight and Ellen Shenk (740-245-5358). \$6.00 (a separate workbook is available for \$5).
- 13) *The Daily Bible*

Materials for Junior & Senior High

Materials suggested by Dave Pratte

- 1) Books by Bob & Sandra Waldron:
 - * *History and Geography of the Bible Story* — A complete historical overview of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation (Guardian of Truth — \$11.95)
 - * "A Generation that Knows Not God" — Teacher Training Manual
 - * Other books: The Waldrons have a whole series of books that discuss the Bible in historical order. These are mainly intended for use by teachers as resource material, rather than workbooks for students.
- 2) Ferrell Jenkins' Books — Designed for adults, some of bro. Jenkins' materials can be adapted for Junior High or High School (Florida College Bookstore). Examples include:
 - Workbook on Ephesians*
 - Theme of the Bible* — This book is a thorough overview of the scheme of redemption.

3) Robert Harkrider's Books

Also primarily designed for use with adults, these can be adapted for teens. He has workbooks on many books of the Bible. The following topical studies are especially helpful for teens:

Basic Bible Doctrines — Two workbooks. The first teaches the truth about salvation. The second discusses various common doctrines taught by denominations and cults.

"I Sought for a Man" — Workbook designed to teach men their duties in the home, in society, and in the church.

4) Ladies' Studies, good for teaching teen girls:

Daughters of Eve, Lottie Beth Hobbs, a thorough study of women of the Bible.

The Challenge of Being a Wife, Ruth Hazelwood. This book emphasizes woman as wife and mother.

5) Bible Correspondence Courses and New Convert Studies. Courses I have used effectively include:

* "Home Bible Studies," by David Pratte

"Jesus the Way," Sewell Hall (very basic)

"Know Your Bible," Gene Tope (Guardian of Truth)

"Acts of the Apostles," David Pharr

6. * Light to My Path Workbooks, David Pratte. Workbooks on various topics and various books of the Bible.

Topic studies include: How to Study the Bible; Prayer; Attending Church Meetings; Responsibilities in the Local Church; Human Relations (family, government, business, etc.); Purity in Everyday Living (moral issues); Church Organization and Work; Abortion/

Textual studies, chapter by chapter through books of the Bible. Books now available include: Gospel of John; Acts of the Apostles; 1 Corinthians; James - Jude.

7) * Internet Bible Academy, by David Pratte (<http://www.poboxes.com/academy>). The Internet Bible Academy offers Bible courses over the Internet at a reasonable fee. Study guides, quizzes, and tests are provided. Upon successful completion of each course, students may receive a course grade and a transcript.

The following courses are available or should become available soon: 101 — Introduction to the Gospel; 111 — Living as a Christian (part 1); 112 — Living as a Christian (part 2)

Materials suggested by others

1) ABC (Amplified Bible Curriculum) 2nd edition

2) Ken Weliever curriculum material

3) *Growing Up in the Lord*, Jeff Hamilton — sex education material for young men, written by a Christian.

4) *Christian Manhood: A Guide to Training Boys to be Spiritually Strong Men*, Gary Maldaner, Plain Path Publishers, P. O. Box 830, Columbus, NC 28722.

5) *Preparing for Adolescence*, James Dobson — Designed to study with young people as they enter their teens years

6) *Life on the Edge*, James Dobson — Designed for young people in the late teens, about to leave home and make decisions on their own.

7) *Reproducible Maps, Charts, Timelines and Illustrations*, published by Regal publishing (division of Gospel Light). Materials in this book may be reproduced as needed.

Our thanks to all who offered suggestions, and especially to those who followed up to give us more specific information.

We hope to have another meeting next year. See you there, Lord willing.

WELCOME TO MARK MAYBERRY

Mark Mayberry is a gospel preacher who works with the Lord's church in Clarksville, TN. For some time now Mark has been a co-owner of Hslist, an email list for Christians interested in home schooling. He has also helped us conduct a home-school meeting at the Florida College lectures. He and his wife Sherelyn have been home-schooling their two boys for several years now.

We are glad to announce that Mark has agreed to write an article for each issue of *Family Times*. We look forward to his material and we welcome this opportunity to make his material available to you.

SLOUCHING TOWARD GOMORRAH: MODERN LIBERALISM AND AMERICAN DECLINE,
BY ROBERT BORK

Reviewed by Mark Mayberry

Rarely have I found a more clearly written and challenging book. I concur with the comments of Senator Chuck Grassley: “A must-read for anyone who cares about the future of American society. Presents a provocative, critical and convincing picture of a culture careening out of control, a culture that must change its ways or face destruction.”

In the 1960s, America underwent a radical transformation. The cultural landscape was so thoroughly altered that it now seems we are living in a strange, hostile and alien world. Although the fruit of our cultural collapse is of recent maturation, the seed was planted decades, if not centuries, earlier. In fact, the source of our current disintegration may have existed from the very beginning of western civilization.

Western culture is founded upon the contrasting principles that flowed from the Renaissance and the Reformation. These two great streams surged in opposite directions. The Renaissance accentuated the glory of man while the Reformation emphasized the glory of God. The former asserted man’s autonomy while the latter affirmed God’s authority. The age of Reason and the Enlightenment grew out of the ideals of the Renaissance, while Puritanism and all other efforts of Biblical revival and restoration are rooted in the Reformation.

So Western civilization in general, and American culture in particular, is established upon the conflicting ideals of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the one man-centered and the other God-centered. The Founding Fathers of our country were quite obviously influenced by both realms of thought. For centuries, these ideals, though dissimilar, were in a balanced state of equilibrium. America, a secular state, was strongly influenced by Judeo-Christian ethics. The one depended upon the other. The first amendment, which declared a separation between church and state, in no way expressed an anti-religious bias. The Founding Fathers understood and appreciated the positive tension that existed between the secular and the spiritual. This balance of conflicting forces created a stable environment in which pluralistic freedoms could flourish, and it did so gloriously for nearly 200 years.

The essence of our national culture is captured in those ringing words of the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

Robert Bork effectively argues that these words not only express the genius of America, but they also contain the seeds of our present distress. These self-evident truths have validity in the context of the moral culture wherein they originated. But divorced from that culture, and taken to extremes, these glorious truths become malicious untruths. The noble idea that “all men are created equal” has gradually been twisted into the doctrine of radical egalitarianism. That grand notion that all have the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” is gradually degenerated into the dogma of radical individualism. These two doctrines have become the twin pillars upholding the idolatrous temple of modern liberalism. Wholly false and utterly pernicious, they lie at the base of our present cultural collapse.

Radical Egalitarianism

Radical egalitarianism seeks equality of outcomes rather than equality of opportunities. According to the prophets of modern liberalism, inequality is intrinsically bad, especially that of the economic variety. The rich are evil simply because they have more than the poor. Liberals are determined to stamp out all inequality. The only way to achieve this in a free society is through the elimination of freedom. Thus the free-market, free-enterprise system is much despised by modern liberals, who prefer socialism to capitalism. Even if they cannot completely reorient our economy, at least they can attempt to achieve equality of outcomes through heavy-handed governmental interference. Thus, for over 60 years, government policy has sought to redistribute wealth by taking from the rich and giving to the poor. Roosevelt’s *New Deal* led to Truman’s *Fair Deal* which was followed by Johnson’s *Great Society*. While such programs may have been launched with noble intentions, they led to a welfare state, a nanny state. When representative government did not go far or fast enough, liberals turned to the courts to achieve their ends. As a result, affirmative action and mandated quotas have become part of the political landscape.

According to the religion of radical egalitarianism, intellectual disparity is also harmful. An egalitarian educational system must necessarily oppose meritocracy and reward for achievement. Thus, the whole concept of educational standards – including the giving of grades – is under attack. We know that

Johnny can't read, but a low score in English class might negatively affect his self-esteem. As a result, we are witnessing a decline of, and disdain for, high academic standards – all in the name of equality!

Judge Bork sets forth the poisonous fruits of this philosophy. On a national basis, radical egalitarianism leads to collectivism and tyranny. On a personal basis, it leads to a loss of initiative and a spirit of dependency. It bodes ill for the future when so many are willing to hold their hands out and say, "You owe me something!"

Radical Individualism

Radical individualism seeks the complete elimination of any limits to self-gratification. According to the prophets of modern liberalism, the constraints of religion and morality are inherently bad. Therefore, anyone who defends our Judeo-Christian heritage – be he a preacher or a politician – is an intolerant, hate-filled bigot. As a result, the voice of religion and traditional morality has largely been silenced in the great public marketplace of ideas.

The autonomous self has become the highest expression of freedom. Proponents of this hedonistic philosophy demand absolute freedom, especially in the area of sexual license. Yet, this kind of "freedom" was never envisioned by the Founding Fathers. They never thought in terms of unrestricted freedom, but fully understood that personal autonomy was checked by morality and the mores of culture. They did not envision a citizenship given over to Epicurean excesses, but a people governed by self-control, duty and honor.

Again, Judge Bork reveals the noxious fruit of hedonism. Radical individualism leads to a culture that is becoming ever more degraded and debased. It gives birth to multiplication of pathologies like addiction, divorce, illegitimacy, and lawlessness. Freedom loosed from personal morality must inevitably lead to anarchy, which in the end, can only lead to further loss of freedoms.

Conclusion

The words of Thomas Jefferson resonate down through the centuries: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." Yet, ideas often are valid only as they are counterbalanced by other ideas. Equality and freedom, while noble concepts, do not stand alone. These abstractions can find proper expression only in the broader context of a society that is governed by law and morality.

The Declaration of Independence does not even begin to describe man's various duties and responsibilities. The church provides a framework for moral life. The home provides a framework for familial life. The Constitution provides a framework for civil life. Other institutions provide a framework for social life. Freedom and equality are defined and limited by each of the aforementioned institutions. Yet, each of these institutions are under sustained attack. Modern liberalism seeks to subvert the church, the home, and all other civic and social institutions. Each of these institutions stands between the individual and the state. As these institutions are weakened, the state grows more powerful and freedom itself is in jeopardy.

What lies ahead for our nation? Unless there is a restoration of the original ideals on which our country was based, the future is bleak. When Sodom and Gomorrah sank past any hope of redemption, the Lord rained brimstone and fire upon them and overthrew the cities of the plain (Gen 19:24-25). America seems to be following the same shameful path. The judgment that befell Sodom and Gomorrah should serve as an object lesson to us (2 Pet 2:6). Will we suffer the same end? It seems likely, if America continues on its present course. In fact, our fate may be worse, because we have had greater spiritual opportunities than did they (Mat 11:20-24; Mar 6:11).