

# Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman



Vol. 6, No. 3

“And ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:10

May/June 2003

## Packing for Heaven

by Sally Specht



Jessi, my five-year-old granddaughter, loves to be read to, and her favorite subject is about going to heaven. A few days ago, she asked my daughter, Ginger, why Jesus didn't come right away. Why is He waiting when there are

so many sad things happening and so many people starving? Ginger looked at her sadly and said, “I think it's because we're not ready.” Jessi, who is impulsive and eager to get things done immediately, said, “Well, what are we supposed to do? Pack our suitcases?” When Ginger told me this story, funny as it may seem, I thought, “Out of the mouths of babes...” She's right, I mused, we do need to pack our suitcases.

Ron's and Carl's families, some of our very close friends, are packing to move. They are leaving behind their houses, and probably many other things they think they will no longer need in their new location. However, there are many items they will need, so some big moving vans are required to move all of their belongings. This got me to thinking—just what will we need on our trip to heaven? In my mind, I began to roam through my house to see what I might need.

I started in the living room. I have some very nice end tables. They are really well made. They have burl inlays on the tops and are in excellent condition. But, honestly, I doubt that I'll need them in heaven. I walk into my dining room. I think how beautiful my dining room set is. I know I won't need it, but can I just walk off and leave it? Then I wander into the kitchen. Oh, I really like my stove. It has a self-cleaning oven, and the top is so easy to keep clean, but I guess won't need the stove.

When I walk into the family room, I look at my recliner. What would I do without my recliner? It's where I love to crash at the end of a hard day. It is even where I study my Bible in the mornings. I wonder if I should bring my recliner??

Then I walk upstairs and into my bedroom. Oh, I should take my bed. It is so comfortable, even though I don't stay in

it nearly long enough each night. I walk into the dressing room and open my closet. What shall I take to heaven? Do I have any “heavenly” clothes? I think not. However, since I should be really comfortable on the trip, I try on a jogging suit. Now, that would make for good traveling comfort. But, I decide against it and put on an old bathrobe. That would be best, I think.

I open a drawer to pack an overnight bag. At least I can and should take one of those. I look at my hair things. Won't I need to brush my hair? And what about shampoo? Certainly I'll need that. But then, would one bottle of shampoo last a thousand years? I open my makeup drawer and shut it quickly. I'm quite sure I won't need that. What about my toothbrush? Shall I take a toothbrush? How can a person get along without a toothbrush? I stick it in my robe pocket.

I walk downstairs and get ready to walk out the door in my ugly, old robe, with my toothbrush in my pocket, when I re-

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## MAIL CALL:

I have held back from “adopting” one of the children because of my age. I am 92 and don’t know how long I’ll be around... Well, if you would like you can assign me a child (I prefer a girl) in the age category of 8-10, so she is old enough to understand if I fail to hold out. I wouldn’t be “mom,” but rather “grandmom,” to her. How’s that?

I am enclosing an offering and I have a box ready to mail the slow way, with handmade toys for a few of the children. (Rag dolls I make.) They are small ones. I didn’t count how many I put in, but filled a box with them and called the package “Used gifts for orphans.” *Oregon*

[Please see "Spotlight on Orphans," page 9, to learn about how this "grandmom's" request turned out! Editor]

I appreciate *Hearth to Hearth*. The articles always lift me up and are encouraging. I especially love [George McDaniel's] health articles. He is very knowledgeable and a good writer. God is using you to reach others who need quality reading material and information. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication. *New Jersey*

Please would you kindly discontinue my subscription and rather send it to my daughter from now on... I have a sick husband and have no time to read it anymore. My daughter loves poems so it will be lovely for her as it is such a good magazine. So please do the exchange for me and therewith cancel mine.

*The Netherlands*

It was said that the Pastor has to pay duty on the packages sent. Should I send more to cover that, too? *Ohio*

[When you send a package to your child, or to all the children, there will be duty to pay on the other end. The amount of duty required depends on the value you assign to the items in the package.

## Editorial

### The Most Important Move — Will We be Ready?

*Esther McDaniel*

Moving. The very word brings to mind many pleasant, as well as some not-so-pleasant, memories. I calculated that in my short (relative to eternity, you understand) lifetime, I have moved an average of just under once a year. For the last several moves we have declared, “This will be our last move until Jesus comes to take us home.”

Every move we make, we try to pare down our belongings but, in the end, we always pack up all of what’s not been sorted through and take it along. Something important might be lost if we just dump it, we rationalize.

March 30th was moving day again. When the movers (some of our much-appreciated friends) came to help us move to the little house directly across the street, much of the necessary packing was still undone. While some were toting furniture and other items, others were packing things into boxes. And so, again, much was moved to our new home that is neither needed nor wanted.

I’ve been thinking about that last, much-anticipated move—the move to my heavenly home. What a relief to not have to pack my belongings. But, I wonder: Am I really willing to let go of them?

I am convinced that this question is being answered each day, based on what I selfishly hoard versus what I use to bless others. In mulling over the various chapters of my life, I can see that my priorities need quite an adjustment. Busyness seems to have taken over and important relationships are being neglected. As I ponder this fact, I am moved to the realization that I *need* and *want* to take the time to strengthen these relationships; beginning with my relationship with my heavenly Father and His dear Son. Following closely on the heels of that relationship are the relationships with my husband, our children and grandchildren, our elderly mothers and other important members of our extended family. Friendships, also, need to be strengthened.

As you read this issue of *Hearth to Hearth*, I hope you, too, will consider the priorities in your own life and how they stack up in light of eternal values. One day soon, I know we’ll be glad we did.



This is the reason that it is best to “use” the items before they are mailed, by washing clothing, putting an “X” in permanent marker on the bottoms of shoes, and/or otherwise making those items unfit to return to the store, or to declare as “new.” Then you can put a garage sale price on them, which will reduce the amount of duty needed on the other end.

We realize that it is expensive to send a package to your child, and

we very much appreciate the fact that you are interested enough in the child to go to the trouble and expense of doing so. It is certainly helpful if you can include an extra amount to cover duty fees, when you send your monthly sponsorship amount, but it is not required. Editor]

It was very encouraging to receive your letter telling about the Homa Bay Hope Centre. I’m surely glad things are getting worked out better for the children...

I do enjoy *Hearth to Hearth* very much. My heart really goes out to these orphan children. I want to help all I can.

May God bless you richly for what you are doing. Our prayers are for you and the orphanage.

*Tennessee*

God bless each of you involved in helping the orphans—especially that pastor and his dear wife! *Ohio*

Keep up the good work. I don't have time to write now but I want to get this check in the mail. It is for my orphan, Rachel. I don't have all the info yet but at least here is the first check.

*Arizona*

### PRAYER CALL:

1) Please agree with me in prayer that the Holy Spirit will cause all seven of us in my family (me, my husband and five daughters—and their five future Christian husbands who need to be prayed in, not reality yet), that we will all be Living Epistles for the Gospel's sake."

[What a lovely and thoughtful request. Surely God will bless the home and family of such a praying mother. Editor]

2) Please continue to remember the Homa Bay Hope Centre in your prayers. There are many trials, but the faith of Pastor Maurice and his wife, Edith, is strong. Our God is alive and well, and He is able.

3) As we prepare and/or eat our well-planned, well-prepared and

balanced meals, let's remember the plight of the many who are starving in this world, due to drought or other conditions beyond their control.

We received a prayer request from western Zambia, which reads in part: "Currently most of our fellow villagers have now started consuming treated maize-seed meant for planting and many, many of our fellow villagers have resorted to using unorthodox methods to clean the chemically-treated maize before eating it as food. So what we do, we wash the seeds to remove the chemical. Thereafter, we fry and give the children to eat because we cannot sit and watch them die."

### EDITOR'S NOTES:

» **Moving?** If you have changed your address, please kindly notify us to avoid missing any issues, as well as to help us save on expenses. Thank you for your help.

» **Reminder:** The return address shown on the back page is strictly for postal purposes and should not be used for correspondence. The correct address for correspondence is shown in the box at right.

» **Brochures** are now available for the Homa Bay Hope Centre project. If you would like to help promote this project, please let us know how many brochures you can use.

## Recipe Corner

### Crispy Lemon Dills (by the jar)

2 - 4 Tbsp. raw onions (sliced, diced or small whole)

¼ - ½ tsp. garlic powder (may use two garlic cloves but pickles may not be as crisp.)

2 Tbsp. dill seed

2 tsp. or 1 Tbsp. salt

4 Tbsp. lemon juice

Boiling water

Fill clean jar with onions and 1 Tbsp. dill seed. Add cucumbers, tightly packed. Put salt, garlic powder and 1 Tbsp. dill seed on top. Pour lemon juice on, then fill to neck of jar with boiling water. Place new canning lid on jar and tightly seal with jar ring. Place jar in large pan and cover with water. Water bath for 10 minutes after water boils in pot. Makes 1 quart. May do several quarts at a time.

*Maria Harvey, Chisholm, Minnesota*

### Our Method:

*Hearth to Hearth* is published bi-monthly and sent free upon request. Voluntary donations are appreciated.

### Our Mission:

Believing that we can find completeness in all areas of our lives only "in him, who is the head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:10), it is the mission of *Hearth to Hearth* to provide a forum for Christian women to reach out to each other in friendship, joy and hope; and to encourage each other to find our completeness in Christ as we sojourn here on our way to the kingdom. By this completeness in Christ we become better wives, mothers, daughters, homemakers, neighbors and friends. As an outgrowth of this completeness, we will desire to share the love of God through our efforts to meet the needs of others and to relieve the suffering of those for whom Christ died.

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The



of God

Part 3

## Bringing About Reconciliation

by David Clayton

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” What does it mean by the phrase “things in heaven”? We can understand things in earth needing to be reconciled to God, but what is the meaning of the phrase “things in heaven”? There is no sin in heaven; not since Lucifer and his angels were expelled. Yet, this text states that things in heaven were also reconciled to God by the blood of the cross. What this suggests is that even in heaven there was some kind of restraint in the relationship of the heavenly angels toward God. Not sin, but a restraint.

Up to the time of the rebellion of Satan, the angels had never heard a lie. Falsehood had never been expressed. There was no need to measure or weigh the truthfulness of another’s statements. The concept of error must have been difficult for the angels to grasp. Satan said some things about God that were not true. This being, who stood by the throne of God, whose job was to disseminate the truth of God in the universe, was saying things about God that were untrue. Although most of the angels did not side with him, and remained sinless, their thinking had been tainted. There was now a restraint between them and God.

Interestingly, God was not satisfied with just sinlessness! That is an awesome thought. Do you know why God wanted to reconcile things in heaven? He wasn’t satisfied.

### Sinlessness, of itself, is not good enough for God!

I have not achieved what God is after! That is not good enough for God. If a parent has a child that never disobeys, but cowers around the parent wondering if he will be spanked at any time, and never says “I love you,” would that parent be satisfied? In heaven it was sinless, but God wanted all restraints to be removed, and it was through the blood of the cross that finally, even in heaven, they got to see what the Father’s heart was really like.

So I say to you, sinlessness is not good enough. There is a need of a relationship where there is fire between us and the Lord: fire in our feelings, in our love; where there is openness and freedom with our Father. He does not want me to come to His worship, whether in church or at home, feeling restrained or not quite sure how I am to behave. He wants me to know the type of person He is so I can feel absolutely free

with Him, and so He wants me to know Him as He really is. The ultimate purpose of the plan of salvation is that all things should be reconciled.

When I was in high school, there was a certain teacher who liked to use a lot of big words. One day a boy went up to him, quite familiarly, and touched him. He drew back, saying, “Boy, don’t exercise your pugnacity so ferociously.” We all had a good laugh, but the teacher didn’t appreciate the fact that the boy was being so familiar with him. The teacher wanted to keep this student at a distance, and sometimes when we approach somebody who is higher up in rank than we are, we have this kind of restraint. We are programmed this way in the world. Even when somebody professes to be my friend, if they are a little higher up on the social ladder than I am, I tend to be restrained in my relations with the person. And this carries over in the way we relate to God, doesn’t it? He is at the pinnacle of the ladder, and so coming to Him we restrain ourselves, and we think, “Am I using the right word in speaking to Him? Am I in the right position? Are my thoughts right?” And sometimes we are so busy analyzing ourselves that we forget what we are to pray about, or the thoughts won’t come and we lose our concentration.

**There is a need of a relationship where there is fire between us and the Lord.**

It is God that desires to have an unshadowed relationship with us. While He cannot remove that veil of invisibility, we can, by faith see into His heart. We cannot see it with our physical eyes. If we could see Him with our physical eyes all we would see is this glory that would frighten and then destroy us. However, it is God’s plan that, through faith, we can discern the warm heart beneath the impenetrable face of God. Do you want to know what God is thinking? Go to Jesus. He is God’s heart made visible. When you look at Him, you are seeing God’s heart; plus nothing, minus nothing. God’s heart is revealed in Christ.

Colossians 1:15 says that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. What does that mean? Was He physically the image of God when He was here? Definitely not! His physical presence did not strike men dead. Was Jesus omniscient like God? In other words, could He work out math problems in a fraction of a second? Did He have that kind of mental capability? No, He had a human brain. His brain’s ability was like ours. The way in which He was exactly like God was morally and spiritually. This is important to recognize.

When Jesus was on earth, His reflection of God's image was so perfect that when Philip asked Him to "show us the Father," He said, "Do you mean I have been so long with you and you don't know me?" (See John 14:8, 9) The disciples did not see the power of God, they did not see the mental ability of God, but they saw the emotional, spiritual, and moral side of God through Jesus, and so these are the qualities that we need to concentrate on. We don't need to look at a Mike Tyson or an Arnold Schwarzenegger and say, "These men reflect the physical capabilities of God." We don't need to look at an Isaac Newton or a John Nash and say, "These men reflect the mental capabilities of God. This is not what Jesus came to focus on. We need to look at the spiritual attributes of Christ when we talk about the image of God.



[This is part three of a six-part series. Pastor David Clayton may be contacted at Restoration Ministries, PO Box 23, Knockpatrick, Manchester, Jamaica, WI. His phone is 876-904-7392.]

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member my purse. I never go anywhere without my purse. So, I look inside to see if I can make it lighter. I pull out my glasses. I can't see up close without my glasses. How could I leave those behind? Then I remember my eyes will be perfect soon, and I toss them aside. But my billfold. What about the credit cards? I laugh. Sure... credit cards in heaven? I won't need my driver's license. Money? No, I won't need money. What about my savings accounts? I've been saving for so long; there must be something in there. I chuckle. I guess I won't need those either. I look at my ID. Surely God knows who I am, so I won't need that. I just toss away my purse and even my keys. Christ is the one with the keys, remember?

Before I open the garage door, I look at my washer and dryer and say to myself, "No, won't need them." I open the door and see our new truck and the old Explorer. "They go so slow compared to winged travel," I conclude. Shutting the door to the garage, I head for the front door. I look down at my

robe, only to discover it is quite filthy and ragged. With my toothbrush sticking out of the pocket, I slip off the robe, hang it on the doorknob, and walk out the door. "Just like I came into the world," I think. As I pass through the door, leaving all things behind, I feel a strange warmth about me and notice that I am not naked, but have on a beautiful robe of light. It doesn't belong to me, but it is beautiful and covers up all my ugliness.

I knew then that, instead of packing my bags for heaven, I had unpacked them. I had given up all and had gained everything. Yes, Jessi, we need to get ready, but perhaps a better plan would be to unpack our bags.

Is there then nothing that we must take to heaven, Jessi? Oh yes, our character; one that has been molded and changed by the spirit of Jesus dwelling in us; for without that, I'm not sure we *could* unpack our bags.



[Sally wrote this essay on May 21, 1998.]

## When I Come to Heaven



When I come to heaven, Lord, what shall I bring;  
 My golden necklace and my diamond ring?  
 I have some great treasures of jade, ivory and bone,  
 And aren't we judged, Lord, by what we own?  
 My important position, I've climbed up so high;  
 There just isn't anything my money won't buy.  
 So tell me again, Lord, just what are your needs?  
 I've helped you a lot by doing good deeds.



You've got it all wrong, my child, my dear;

All that I've wanted is having you near.  
 While storing your treasures, there's much you forgot;  
 My love and forgiveness can never be bought.  
 I offer it freely; just ask and receive.  
 But you never listened; you didn't believe.  
 Your works and possessions are just filthy rags,  
 So if you're coming to heaven, unpack your bags.



*Elizabeth Andrews*

[Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven**. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21-23)

Editor]

## Health is Wealth

# Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (Part 6)

*George McDaniel*

### Nutrition - 2

Last month we studied the importance of eating a nutritious diet. This is the first aspect of nutrition.

The second aspect of nutrition has to do with how well the body processes the food and delivers it to where it is needed and how efficiently it utilizes it and removes waste products.

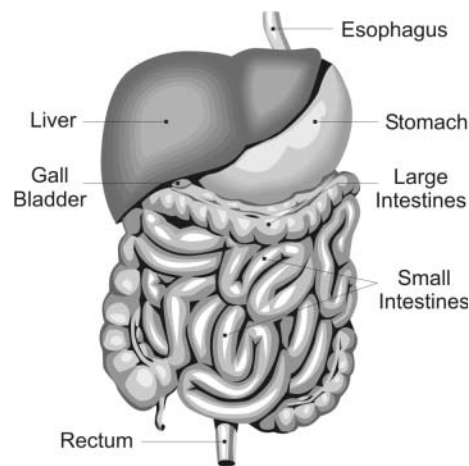
The digestive system consists of the mouth; esophagus; stomach; small intestine (with three sections: duodenum, jejunum and ileum); large intestine (also called colon); and rectum. Two other major organs involved with digestion are the pancreas and liver, both of which open into the duodenum.

The digestion of food starts in the mouth where it needs to be well chewed. The teeth are very important to digestion and should be in good shape. Teeth that are in poor condition can interfere with this important first step. Haste and carelessness can also contribute to poorly chewed food. The food needs to be thoroughly mixed with saliva. Saliva contains a digestive enzyme, called ptyalin, which begins the digestion of starch into simple sugars. Starch is composed of glucose molecules which are joined together chemically into long chains. The saliva enzyme begins the process of breaking down the starch into smaller units so the body can absorb and utilize it. This is one reason why food should be well chewed and not washed down with water or some other drink. The saliva also lubricates the food so it will more easily pass through the esophagus into the stomach.

The stomach produces hydrochloric acid and the digestive en-

zyme pepsin. Pepsin acts on proteins, breaking them down into amino acids. Pepsin works better in acidic conditions. The stomach also secretes mucous which protects the stomach lining from being digested by its own secretions and which lubricates the food mixture. The contraction of muscles in the stomach wall thoroughly mixes the food particles with the stomach secretions.

Food normally stays in the stomach from two to five hours; however,



a high fat meal stays longer in the stomach. The presence of a large amount of fat causes a signal to be sent to the duodenum to slow down the release of food from the stomach. Only protein digestion occurs in the stomach. Fats and carbohydrates are unchanged. The salivary enzyme that digests starch is inactivated by the stomach acid. Once digestion starts, no more food should be eaten until the stomach is empty. If a snack is eaten while partly-digested food is in the stomach, the partly-digested food will be held until the more-recently-eaten food is processed. Fermentation of the undigested carbohydrate can

occur, which results in toxic substances being produced.

The food mixture that is ready to leave the stomach is a thick liquid called chyme. The chyme is released in small amounts at a time into the upper end of the small intestine, called the duodenum. Duodenum simply means twelve, as it is approximately twelve inches long. Here the chyme is acted upon by secretions from the pancreas and liver. The main contribution of the liver at this point is bile, which acts to emulsify fats, or break them down into small particles so they can be acted upon more thoroughly by fat-digesting enzymes. This is the reason why a high-fat diet is retained longer in the stomach, so that it can be mixed more completely with bile.

The pancreas produces three kinds of enzymes- trypsin, amylase and lipase. Trypsin completes the digestion of protein into amino acids; amylase completes the digestion of starches into simple sugars; lipase digests fats into fatty acids and glycerol. The pancreas actually produces many kinds of digestive enzymes with specialized functions, but they fall into three main categories: protease (trypsin), amylase and lipase. For example, there are protein-digesting enzymes that specialize in cleaving simple amino acids off from the ends of peptide chains and there are some that break down bonds on the interior of peptide chains.

When digestion is complete, starch has become simple sugars, protein has become amino acids and fat has become fatty acids, ready to be absorbed and used by the body. Vitamins and minerals don't need

*(Continued bottom of next page)*

# The Other Woman In My Life



After 21 years of marriage, I discovered a new way of keeping alive the spark of love.

A little while ago I had started to go out with another woman. It was really my wife's idea. "I know that you love her," she said one day, taking me by surprise.

"But I love YOU," I protested. "I know, but you also love her."

The other woman that my wife wanted me to visit was my mother, who has been a widow for 19 years, but the demands of my work and my three children had made it possible to visit her only occasionally. That night I called to invite her to go out for dinner.

"What's wrong, are you well," she asked? My mother is the type of woman who suspects that a late night call or a surprise invitation is a sign of bad news.

"I thought that it would be pleasant to pass some time with you," I responded.

"Just the two of us." She thought about it for a moment, then said, "I would like that very much."

As I drove over to pick her up, I was a bit nervous. When I arrived at her house, I noticed that she, too, seemed to be nervous about our date. She waited

in the door with her coat on. She had curled her hair and was wearing the dress that she had worn to celebrate her last wedding anniversary. She smiled from a face that was as radiant as an angel's.

"I told my friends that I was going to go out with my son, and they were impressed," she said, as she got into the car. "They can't wait to hear about our meeting."

We went to a restaurant that, although not elegant, was very nice and cozy. My mother took my arm as if she were the First Lady. After we sat down, I had to read the menu. Her eyes could only read large print.

Half way through the entrées, I lifted my eyes and saw Mom sitting there staring at me. A nostalgic smile was on her lips. "It was I who used to have to read the menu when you were small," she said.

"Then it's time that you relax and let me return the favor," I responded. During the dinner we had an agreeable conversation—nothing extraordinary—but catching up on recent events of each other's life.

As we arrived at her house later, she said, "I'll go out with you again, but only if you let me invite you."

I agreed.

"How was your dinner date?" asked my wife when I got home.

"Very nice. Much more so than I could have imagined," I answered.

A few days later my mother died of a massive heart attack. It happened so suddenly that I didn't have a chance to do anything for her.

Some time later I received an envelope with a copy of a restaurant receipt from the same place Mother and I had dined. An attached note said: "I paid this bill in advance. I was almost sure that I couldn't be there but, nevertheless, I paid for two plates—one for you and the other for your wife. You will never know what that night meant for me. I love you."

At that moment I understood the importance of saying, in time: "I Love You," and of giving our loved ones the time that they deserve. Nothing in life is more important than God and your family. Give them the time they deserve, because these things cannot be put off till "some other time."



[Our sincere thanks to the author, whom we were not able to locate.]

(Continued from previous page)

digestion, but the process of digestion releases them from the food so they also can be taken up by the body.

The lining of the small intestine contains millions of tiny finger-like projections, called villi, which greatly increase the surface area and

enable the body to absorb large amounts of digested nutrients. What is not absorbed by the small intestine passes on to the large intestine, or colon. Most of the water and minerals are absorbed here. The waste matter that remains passes into the rectum at the end of the colon and from there leaves the body.

The next article will deal with what happens to the nutrients after they are absorbed from the intestine.



[George is a registered nurse who enjoys doing research into how the body functions and how to keep it in optimum health. He writes from Pineville, WV.]





**Nurse Mary visiting with some of the children**

## Spotlight on Orphans

# God's Tender Care For His Children

by Vicki Kritzell

Day, what could be more of a tribute to a mother's love than opening her heart to a child who lives half a world away? A child who was cast aside, but is now thriving because of the loving support he or she is receiving through a heart that was opened by God; a child whom she may never have the chance to meet, much less embrace, but lives in the heart of her family as surely as if born to it. Our readers are these mothers; and fathers, too.

This is the kind of love we are seeing in an overwhelming abundance. The response to the children at Homa Bay Hope Centre, in the past few weeks, has been inspirational. For a time, we were struggling with the fear we could not find the support we needed for this undertaking. As we watched Pastor and Edith open their home to yet more children, we cautioned them that we were worried we would not be able to provide for so many. They simply reminded us this was God's project, not ours, and He would show the way. And we knew, if the knock was at our door, and it opened to a small child who had nowhere else to go, we too would find room.

We believe you have opened that door! Last week alone, eight more children were sponsored! One group of people who had been sponsoring a young boy, found out he had four younger brothers also living at the Centre. When these magnificent folks learned of the brothers, they decided to sponsor all five of them! When we notified Pastor Maurice, he was overcome with joy. That same day a couple in Arkansas decided to adopt a small boy named Dalton. When I told Pastor, he told me this story: Just the day before, Dalton had been asking Edith when God might send him a sponsor. Edith informed him that God knew what was best for him and had His own timetable, which we should not question. She told him it could be two minutes, two weeks, or two years, but he should keep praying. The next day, his prayers were answered. What joy Dalton feels, and how his faith has been rewarded. All of the children are praying daily for the blessing of a sponsor. In time, perhaps their prayers will be answered as were Dalton's.

We had a request for a girl, from a 92-year-old woman who, though concerned about her time remaining on this earth, still wanted to be a sponsor. When we spoke to Pastor, he and Edith had a family meeting with the older girls and let them decide who would be the right girl for this Grandma. There is a little girl who cares deeply for a very old woman

As we approach Mother's

who lives near them. She stops by to visit and help however she can, and has even taken her own food so that this frail woman might eat. They were worried about her grief when the inevitable happens, and now Vivian has a new Grandma here in the United States to love.

Carolyn Auma, a beautiful little girl with a crippled foot, and two other girls have also been adopted. Pastor and Edith were so wise when they told us to trust God to see to these children's needs.



There is a young girl named **Susan Achieng** who needs a special family. Susan's parents are both dead and, before she was brought to the Centre, she sometimes went days without food. Susan is deaf, but is attending regular school, which is very difficult for her. She is learning to read and is normal in every other way, but could learn so much more in a school for the deaf. Pastor is looking into such a school and thinks it would cost about \$300 a year to send her.

God bless you mothers and fathers for making Homa Bay Hope Centre your mission, too. We know that many of you are sacrificing greatly for these children, and the results are astounding. May God continue to answer these children's prayers by opening more hearts.

### **Edith and Pastor Maurice write from the Hope Centre**

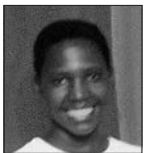
**Edith:** I love the way we live and we are so glad that you (the donors and sponsors) have made this possible. The lives of most of these children had been so difficult and frustrating, to the extent that some doubted the existence of a loving God.



One of the orphans called **David Ondijo** once said, "I kept on asking myself if God is really just. I couldn't understand why God has put people into different categories if He is really just and loving. Why is it that some people are too poor and some are extremely rich. But at the same time, I can remember how my father used to be a hard-working man. When he got some little wealth and moved some steps away from poverty, pride entered his heart and he decided to marry a second wife. This woman did not stay for long, but left when my father became ill in 1993. Then later father died in 1996. All the little wealth he had gathered went to drugs and private hospitals trying to save his life. After he died, we went back to poverty and even worse than our expectation.

It is true that my father died of AIDS. The second woman he had married was a carrier. We later learnt that the woman had been married long ago and her first husband had died of AIDS. My father never knew about that because the woman just looked healthy and strong. My mother is now very sick. She has been sick for four years; the sickness is on and off. Before we came to stay here, it was difficult to get food. My sister wanted to try prostitution in order to get money to feed us, but then we heard about this center. A relative brought us to the center and the committee accepted us in. We praise God. We have food to eat, we go to school, we hope for a better future.”

The story of this boy clearly tells of how “pride comes before a fall.” Wealth is not bad. God wants us to have wealth. But I strongly believe in the counsel of my husband, Pastor Maurice, concerning wealth: “If one does not allow God to show him/her how to use his/her wealth, then automatically the devil will and the way of the devil leads to destruction.” Wealth is good only if God is invited into planning how to spend it.



**Sisiria Akinyi** said, “After the death of my parents, we remained with our grandfather who also just depended on me to bring food. My duty was to wake up very early in the morning and go to the lake to wait for fishermen. My work there was cleaning the boats when all the fish had been removed. After that, they gave me some fish to take home. Things became worse when the fishermen started asking me for sex in exchange. I refused because I am a Christian and love God. Furthermore, I know that most of them are HIV positive. They started to hate me and could not even allow me to wash the boats. That meant no fish for my family. Life became harder and harder. We began selling the properties in our house e.g. chairs, tables, utensils, etc. These were sold at throw away prices, but that did not solve the problem of hunger. Our head teacher sympathized with me, but had no way of assisting me. He told my grandfather of a pastor who stays with some orphans in Homa Bay, so he arranged to give us bus fare, which he did. So we came with my grandfather who narrated the story to Pastor. We, myself and my brother, Abel Otieno, were accepted to this big family. We love to stay here. We go to school and feel far much better. What I want is education and serving God. I feel this is the best place for me.”



**Jared Omondi** says, “We became orphans at an early age. My father died of cholera when I was about five years old. Getting food was not easy. I became a street boy at the age of seven. Our work in the streets was to beg for food and wash cars for the rich.

After that we got paid in order to eat. As young as I was, I feared stealing for fear of being beaten to death by a mob. I had seen several pick-pockets beaten to death, so I was afraid. At the age of nine, I was removed from the streets by

my nephew who also died shortly after. I had to leave his home, for nobody could support me there after his death. When I went back home, I found our grass-thatched house almost collapsing because my elder brother had gone to look for a job in Nairobi. I stayed home, helping to cut grass to repair our house. My brother came back last year after failing to get a job. Life became harder at home and one of our neighbours requested Pastor Maurice to come and see our condition. My brother requested him to take at least one of us and he took me. At the moment I’m going to school and life is better and I know that some day I will make a change in my family if I study hard.”

As a mother to these children, I admire the change of character in their lives. Some came with a lot of worries. I believe that the Christian environment under which we live has done a lot to give them happiness and hope. As their parents, we teach them the beginning of wisdom. We, in our family, like the following quotation, “Parents should teach their children the value and right use of time. Teach them that to do something which will honor God and bless humanity is worth striving for. Even in their *early years* they can be missionaries for God.”<sup>1</sup>

Mother Esther McDaniel gave us some advice, which is working well, and the children really love it. She told us to put the children in pairs so that the bigger ones can assist the younger ones in their daily chores. We tried it and it is wonderful. Elga Akoth (one of the orphans), is the mother of Erick Abuor and Joel Omondi. What she does is to wash their clothes and shoes and make sure that her children are always clean. She enjoys the work and it is fun. Sisiria Akinyi mothers Dickens Ooko and Neema Akumu. This is just one way of making sure the children learn to love work. Consider the following quotation: “Parents cannot commit greater sin than to allow their children to have nothing to do. The children soon learn to love idleness, and they grow up shiftless, useless men and women. When they are old enough to earn their living and find employment, they work in a lazy, droning way, yet expect to be paid as much as if they were faithful. There is a world-wide difference between this class of workers and those who realize that they must be faithful stewards.”<sup>2</sup>

May you continue to fund this orphanage. We need your prayers and any spiritual support.

**Pastor Maurice:** One of the things that I would want to mention at the moment is the issue of freedom.

It is our duty as the parents of these orphans to *create an atmosphere of freedom* for them. This has really helped us a great deal and it gives us the opportunity of learning the benefit and weakness of each and every child. Then both of us, as their parents, sit down to discuss and see ways of helping them. By creating the atmosphere of freedom we mean that:

(Continued bottom of next page)



# Anneken's Letter

A True Story

Excerpts written January 24, 1536

by Judith Bronte

“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. (Proverbs 1:8)

The young Christian mother watched as a crowd of people gathered to witness her execution. A few hours earlier, her own beloved husband had died for the witness of Christ. Now it was to be her turn. Anneken was ready to die, but, one thing was left to be done.

“Here is my fifteen month old son,” she cried to the crowd, “Who wants him? I’ll give all my money to whoever gives him a home!” Anneken searched the crowd for someone bold enough to take the baby of a persecuted Christian. A man stepped forward from the crowd. He had six children of his own, but he could not ignore Anneken's heart-wrenching plea. Anneken kissed her son one last time and placed him into the man's arms, along with a bag of

money. Soon after, Anneken was drowned for her faith in Jesus Christ.

When the man opened the bag of money, he found a letter. It had been written to her son, the same fateful morning she died.

Here are excerpts from Anneken's letter:

“My son, hear the instruction of your mother... Behold, I go the way of the prophets, apostles and martyrs, and drink the cup of which they all have drank.

“Take heed, then, my son, the way of the Lord does not have any side roads. This road is found by few and trodden by even less. In truth, there are many that know this is the road to life eternal. But the road is too hard.

“Because of this, my son, do not regard the multitude of sinners. Don't walk in their ways. Separate yourself from their ways, because they go to hell as sheep go to their slaughter... When you hear of a little flock—poor, simple, and rejected by the world—unite your-

self with them. Because Christ is where the cross is. Don't separate yourself from that place.

“Oh, my son, that your life would be conformed to the Gospel! That the God of peace would sanctify your soul and body to His glory! Amen.

“Oh, Holy Father, sanctify the son of Thy servant. Keep him from evil for Thy name's sake, oh, Lord!”

Moved by Anneken's words, the man saved this letter for her son. Now, we too, can hear this voice from the past, exhorting us to follow Christ, no matter the consequences. On the glorious day we enter heaven, we will know it has been worth it all; when we gaze upon the face of the Son of man.

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” (Luke 21:36)



(Continued from previous page)

1. Each child is free to give suggestions and tell the family his feelings.

2. Each child is free to request for anything at any time. For example, I'm sure your children (when they were young), could request anything from you as their mother. Sometimes what they requested then was not important at their age or may be too expensive for you to afford. But they had the courage to ask. Do you know what gave them that courage? It was the pride that they have a mother (parent) who can provide for all their needs. It was the atmosphere of freedom that gave them that courage to ask for anything because they knew that you were their only hope.

This is the kind of freedom that God has given us. We may request anything at any time because He is our father and He has promised to provide. At times people behave like children because we ask God for the “impossible.” God is not offended when we do this, or request of Him what is not necessary, but, as our father, He knows how to give us what is necessary at the right time. At times one may think that God has not answered his/her prayer, and yet the prayer is answered in a different way that would be of a greater benefit.

That is why we have to give these, our children, the atmosphere of freedom. We don't want them to feel they cannot express their hearts because

their parents are dead. We want them to feel that they can trust us as parents who will care for them and are ready to share their feelings (sorrows and happiness). It is wonderful staying with these children.

We have seen this as a good approach in learning to know the children better. God has shown us the best way to follow in order to have eternal life. At the same time, He doesn't force us to follow that way, but He has given us the freedom of choice.

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 269

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pages 345-346





# Listening to Your Teens

by Gerry Corcoran, M.Ed.

The most important skill in any successful relationship is communication. We can't assume other people understand us, nor that we always understand others. To enhance good communication, parents should focus on a special type of listening...listening to understand their children.

Normally, we seek to first be understood. We often don't listen so much with the intent to understand as with the intent to respond. We focus so much on the response we'll give that we don't accurately hear what the children are saying.

Typically, in raising teens, this is where communication breaks down. We insist that the teen first understands us, the parent. We fail to draw out our teen,

leaving the impression that his opinion or feeling is unimportant. Our kids need to be validated and taken seriously.

Listening to understand is the key to good communication. This means you seek to understand your kids from their point of view. When you listen to understand, you listen actively and with empathy. When a child hears his parent really "gets it", he is reassured and his need to feel understood is satisfied.

In working with hundreds of teenagers, my experience tells me that once a young person believes the adult is truly interested and wants to listen, he will begin to trust and share some of the more troubling things in life. This is where we as parents need to be. We need to be in a relationship of trust, so our teens will feel the freedom to discuss their lives with us. By investing a few minutes of listening each day, you create the opportunity for a

deeper, richer relationship of trust and understanding with your child.

Here are a few key things to remember:

- ◆ Don't assume you understand: paraphrase back what you just heard.
- ◆ Don't assume they understand: ask them to repeat back your expectations.
- ◆ Listen to understand. Focus on hearing your child, not on your response.
- ◆ Walk your talk. Model the type of behavior you expect from your children.
- ◆ Give clear directives. When you give a directive, make it clear what your expectation is.



[Gerry Corcoran is a High School Principal in Fountain Hills, AZ, and co-author of *The Game Plan: Successful Strategies for Parents and their Teens*. Used by permission. Check out the site at: <http://www.arelationshipplaceformarriageandfamilycounseling.com>.]

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