

GIFT GIVERS

Agape International Ministries



July 1999

What You Say Is What You Get The Power of the Word

As I began to write this article, I came upon what every writer dreads — writer's block. After several starts, I confessed to a nearby friend that I just couldn't come up with anything. "Don't say that!" she exclaimed. "Watch the words of your mouth. If you confess that you can't do something, then you won't be able to do it. According to the Word, you get what you say," she added. I already knew this, of course, but I needed to hear it again. Thank God, for my Christian friend. After changing my confession from "can't" to "can," and again calling upon the Holy Spirit to guide my effort, I came up with what you're reading now.

There are millions of words in the world's books and newspapers, but for the present, we'll concern ourselves only with God's words (also called God's Word, or the Word) as recorded in the Bible. The world concentrates on what can be seen by *the natural eye*, whereas God deals with that which can't be seen, except through *the eye of faith*. Paul said that we shouldn't look to what is seen, but rather we should be concerned with the unseen (2 Corinthians 4:17-18). In other words, we shouldn't walk by sight, but by faith.

From Romans 10:17 we learn that faith comes by hearing God's Word. According to Hebrews 11:1-3, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen, and through faith, we understand that the natural and the spiritual worlds were formed by God's Spoken Word. In the first chapter of Genesis, each time God spoke, something was formed (i.e., created). By faith, we too can form the unseen into the seen by speaking things which are

not seen in the natural as though they already are (Mark 11:23). Is it really that simple? Yes, for such is the power of God's Word. God spoke of unseen things as if they already existed, and as a result, they came into being, in accordance with His timing and manner. For example, He said "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," several hundred years before that glorious birth occurred (Isaiah 9:6).

God made us in His image (Genesis 1:26-27). This image, however, is spiritual, an unseen in our natural realm (John 1:18), but being a God of love (1 John 4:8), He wanted us to see Him and know Him. Therefore, he sent the image of Himself, expressed in the flesh and person of Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son and a co-creator, along with the Holy Spirit, of all things seen and unseen (Hebrews 1:1-3).

As Christians, we have God's creative force abiding in us in the person of Jesus Christ, who says in John 15:7, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This gives us the power to confess for ourselves, with each one of us reaping what we sow (Luke 6:37-38), meaning getting what we say. Will your life be one

of "Blessings or Cursings? Refracted Light or muted night?" Will you be of "One Color? One Light? One Word?" The choices are yours. So take hold of your future today by controlling the words of your mouth.

— WADE DAVID

One Word

BY THERESA C. STEWART

Words
capped,
like tubes of paint
contained and refrained
stored
until the creative Muse
moves quickly across an
empty page
as Spirit chases Soul
wed in Unity
clear and crisp
intertwined with Life
celebrating
as the birth of Love
flows forth
from each earthen vessel
WORDS
Blessings or Cursings
refracted Light or muted night
One Color
One Light
One Word

The copyrighted poem "One Word" is reprinted with permission of its author. For a postpaid copy of her collection of poems, *LIKE BEAUTY FOR ASHES*, you may send a \$10.00 donation to Theresa C. Stewart, c/o Outreach Ministries Christian Center, 920 W Government St, Pensacola FL 32501.



GIFT GIVERS

Vol. 6, No. 6 July 1999

Published by
Agape International Ministries
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Editors' Note: Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the publishers, the editors, or other staff members. All Scripture references are from the King James Version [KJV], unless otherwise noted.

EDITORIAL: School Choice

While there's still quite a bit of summer vacation left, that particular seasonal phenomena known as "Back to School" is rapidly approaching. It is not our intent to force anyone's opinions upon anyone else, especially in matters concerning educational choice; therefore, we will not recommend one method of education or type of school over another, as we believe that this is a matter which is best left to the families involved. However, realizing that whoever controls the schools will significantly impact our future, we do have a burden to offer information which we feel may be of value in the making of school-related decisions.

Some of today's finest, most loving, and most dedicated people can be found in the classrooms and administrative offices of today's various school systems, be they public, private, or church-based. Unfortunately, an alarming number of these people are not aware of the Grand Design under which they are operating. As Christians, we are obligated to act according to the Word, and according to our Lord, in the last days, "if it were possible, even God's chosen ones would be deceived. See, I have warned you." Matthew 24:24 [TLB]

It is in the context of "being forewarned is to be forearmed" that this issues' homeschooling information is being offered for your consideration. What you choose to do with the information is entirely up to you, but we want to emphasize that whatever decisions you make regarding the education of your children, stand by those decisions wholeheartedly. This means giving your full support and cooperation, not only to your children, but also to the ones whom you are trusting to perform this precious service. And, as in all things, remember to give our Creator and Lord His proper place and due. Consult Him and obey Him before everyone and everything else.

— WADE DAVID

Remember... It's Your Newsletter

Please help us make your newsletter more relevant and personal. Do you have an insight or an experience that could inspire and encourage others? We hope you'll let us bless others by sharing it through **Gift Givers**. Of course, we can't promise to publish all submissions, but we truly value what you have to say, and love hearing from our readers.



Is Homeschooling for You?

The following article was written at the request of the Editor-in-Chief. It is not an attempt to discredit or to pass judgment on other methods of education. It is my hope that each family would take Proverbs 3:5-6 to heart: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct thy paths."

A Viable Option

In 1984, when my husband first suggested teaching our children at home, I was less than enthusiastic about the prospect. We had agreed that we needed to remove our children from the public school system and were looking at other options. Homeschooling had not been something that we had seriously considered. It was almost unheard of in our area and the few people that we knew who homeschooled were considered "fanatics." Little was known, at the time, about the far reaching effects, both educationally and socially, that homeschooling had on children in modern society. Since I was not a formally trained teacher, I was also apprehensive about my ability to provide the education that our children would need. In addition to these fears, another issue loomed very large. At that time homeschooling had not been clearly defined to be legal in our state, and families were being taken to court and prosecuted for truancy. Not being a fighter, the thought of having to go before the authorities filled me with fear. Knowing that most of the schooling would be my responsibility, my husband, after expressing his desire, left the decision up to me.

For the next several months, I began to educate myself about homeschooling. As I filled my mind, the Lord began to speak to my heart through His Word. He reminded me that our children are gifts (Psalm 127:3-5) and that we are responsible for every part of their upbringing. As Deuteronomy 6:7 [NIV] says, we are to instruct them "when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up." After months of reading, praying, and seeking, I began to feel more and more that the Lord was leading us to teach our children at



home. So, we entered homeschooling totally by faith, standing on the promises the Lord gave us in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" and James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." That decision turned out to be one of the most important and rewarding decisions that we have ever made.

If I could have had just a glimpse of all the joy, blessings, and fulfillment the Lord would bring our family through homeschooling, I would never have hesitated a moment. Our Lord is so faithful!

Getting Started

After the initial decision to home school was made, we began our quest for curriculum. One of the first things Glenn and I did was attend a curriculum fair where we were introduced to four sources from which we could order. When I look at the multitude of choices available to parents today, I am almost overwhelmed. Everything from multicolored workbooks to computer programs and videos exist to fill homeschooling family's needs.



Since there were questions about the legality of teaching our children at home, we enrolled them in an umbrella school the first year. This proved to be an asset since we had to remove our children from the public school rolls. The umbrella school sent for our children's records, set up a permanent file, tested them and sent curriculum based on the testing. We then reported to them monthly.

Our first year was quite an experience. I erroneously thought that the children had to work for an hour on each subject, as they would in a traditional school setting. I did not take into account the effectiveness of one-on-one tutoring as compared to the ratio of one to twenty-five in a traditional classroom. By mid-term their brains were about to explode. From that time forward, I set daily goals for each child based on the work that needed to be completed by the end of the school year. That was a much more

workable solution, and we maintained it through their twelfth-grade year.

Socialization

The word “socialization” always seems to surface whenever anyone discusses homeschooling. Most mothers who have homeschooled for any length of time laugh at this particular concern. At one time, I considered getting the bumper sticker,



“If a mother’s place is in the home, why am I always in the car?” In an effort to calm the unfounded fears concerning socialization, I think that we probably tend to overcompensate. In our area, there are organized sports teams, music, drama, science and play

groups for homeschool families. Of course, those did not exist when we first began homeschooling, but the city sports groups were open to home school children as well as the county 4-H program. There are also many opportunities within local churches.

I believe that the social environment that the world is so concerned about our children missing is an artificial society anyway. Our children are not going to be living in a society made just of children. They need to be prepared to function and interact with all age groups. We were blessed that our children were able to be involved in varied activities, not only with their peers, but also with adults. When our daughter was in high school, she taught a group of third-graders in the Communities in School Summer program. She also taught an adult sewing class in one of the local housing projects. Our son was part of the Killer Bee Education Program in Texas and taught classes to school and scout groups as well as to adult civic groups. Our daughter was the only child member of the Alamo Bobbin Lacers (she had a room full of instant grandmothers). She was also the President of the 1500 4-H members in Bexar County. I tell you these things, not to boast of our accomplishments, but as evidence of God’s blessing in providing us with opportunities to prepare our children. He certainly meets ALL our needs.

Need More Information on Homeschooling?

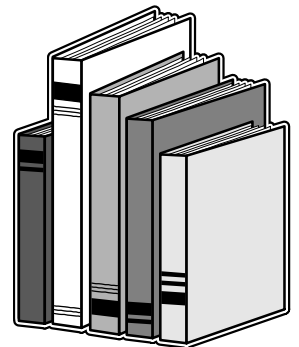
If you have access to the Internet you might want to check out “the ultimate homeschool resource on the Web.” You’ll have access to curriculum reviews, news and research, field trip information, message boards, chat rooms, tons of recommended links, and online mentors (homeschooling moms) - all free. Curriculum materials, books and other helpful products are also available. Log on to

<http://homeschool.crosswalk.com>

for a lot of helpful, everyday homeschooling pointers.

Resources

The printed resources specifically available for homeschooling are too numerous for me to mention. Most larger cities throughout the country have some form of organized homeschool support where you can obtain addresses of catalogs and lists of organized meetings and conventions. If you are not aware of such an organization in your area and are interested in homeschooling, I recommend you contact the Homeschool Legal Defense Association. They can advise you on current laws affecting homeschooling within your state and can also provide you with the name of a contact person in your area. They can be reached at:



Home School Legal Defense Association
P.O. Box 3000
Purcellville, Virginia 20134
Telephone: (540) 338-5600
Web Site: www.hslda.org

Your local Agricultural Extension Service probably has an abundance of free educational materials. Your local library is another good source to explore. These and other community organizations also offer educational workshops for a minimal fee from time to time. In addition, there are many state apprenticeship programs for which a child can register when he reaches the age of sixteen.

Educational resources that we tend to overlook are within our own family and circle of friends. Grandparents are a wonderful source of education. My dad was a history teacher. For many years, during spring break, he would plan a history tour for our children. My mom canned fruits, vegetables, and jellies during the summer, and since my children were raised in the city, it was a special treat to get to "help." We also had a friend who taught our daughter to tat and make bobbin lace. Another friend taught our son about bee-keeping. While these things by no means replaced their daily school work, they were special hands-on learning experiences that one might never consider in our fast-paced world.

The Reward

Both of our children received many significant awards and recognition during their school years, for which we praise the Lord. However, those things will "pass away." As 1 Peter 1:24-25a says,



“For all flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.” We rejoiced in our children’s accomplishments, but we rejoice even more in having children who have not rebelled, who love the Lord, and who have professed faith in the Living Word — Jesus Christ. They will live forever! All the glory belongs to the Lord Jesus, for He has certainly been our Enabler. Without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5)!



As the Lord directs your path, may your family be filled with joy and blessings.

— NANCY HAECKER

Web Site Problems

During the past several weeks, we have experienced a variety of challenges with the Web sites for CAMEM and AIM. These sites are important to the ministry, and we want them to work as efficiently as possible.

We appreciate your reporting any problems you may encounter while visiting the sites. However, calling the office or sending personal e-mail to Dave about these issues is not the best way to get them resolved. For the fastest possible solution, please e-mail your account of malfunctions relating to the CAMEM or AIM Web sites to the ministry’s webmaster at:

aimadmin@aim4jesus.org.

Please note that this e-mail address is the one to use for reporting troubles on either the AIM or the CAMEM Web sites.

In the Spotlight

Through the years the Lord has brought various volunteers to help in our ministries. These people graciously give of their time and energy without compensation or recognition. One such volunteer is our Editor-in-Chief, Wade David.

Wade volunteered for this task about two years ago, and has been faithfully performing in that capacity ever since. Wade brings much expertise to this task. He was a college English professor, and, in addition to his other writing, currently authors a column for his local newspaper.

When we receive the newsletter, we rarely think of the time and effort spent in writing and compiling. It takes many hours of work to produce eight pages. We praise the Lord for Wade’s willingness to help with this project.

Please consider his request (bottom of page 2) for submissions to the newsletter. His job is much easier when he has ample material to complete an issue.

Wade has been experiencing health problems for several months and is facing possible surgery. I know that he would appreciate your prayers for health, wisdom, and direction.

Thank you, Wade, for your wonderful service!





Bonnie's Corner

HAPPY 4th OF JULY! (even though it is probably already past by the time everyone receives this newsletter). Besides being a special day for our country, July 4th is always a fun day. It is a day you are supposed to picnic, eat too much, and get a sunburn just so you can truly say you really celebrated the 4th of July.

We have a couple of new births to announce that are very special to Agape because the parents and grandparents are very special to us.

Gordon and Amy Wilkey have announced the birth of their new granddaughter, Cellicia Amy Koebel, who was born May 26th to Karri and Charlie Koebel. Little Cellicia came into this world weighing 7 lbs. 7oz. For those of you not acquainted with Gordon and Amy, they have been with Agape for a long time. They were missionaries to Brazil for over 30 years, off and on. While there, they adopted two little girls, Karri and Kristi. Those little girls are now grown and have become beautiful young women. Congratulations Karri and Charlie on the birth of your new little Angel.

Congratulations to Chris and Alicia Shotwell on the birth of their new daughter, Rebecca Elizabeth Shotwell. She was born Sunday, June 13th, weighing 6 lbs. 11 ozs. The grandparents, Robert and Shirley Shotwell, are very proud of this new addition to the Shotwell family. Shirley told me they were expecting Rebecca Elizabeth to be here June 18th, so I was happily surprised to hear of her early arrival.

We rejoice when new children and grandchildren join our Agape families. We feel like they are our own, and praise God for the opportunity to hear of the birth of these new little lives.

Dave and I have a special prayer request. Our little grandson, Scott Tully, will be having surgery June 24th, to have his tonsils removed. Scottie is three years old and is a miracle baby. He was born a premie, weighing only 2 lbs. 7 ozs. at birth.

His tonsils are extremely large, and because of their enlarged size the Doctor says it is a miracle he can even breathe. His surgery will be over by the time this newsletter reaches you, but it is never too late for prayer.

While sitting here typing, I received a phone call from Larry Bender to let me know that his father, Thomas Bender, passed away Sunday, June 6th. Larry has taken care of his father for many years to avoid putting him in a nursing home. At the time of his passing, Thomas was 71 years old. He had suffered from a degenerative disease similar to Parkinson's disease, only much more progressive. Thomas was a Christian man and now has no more pain or worry. His wife, Phyllis, will miss him very much, but we know she is happy that his days of suffering are over. Please be in prayer for the Bender family as they adjust to the loss of their loved one.

Also, please be in prayer for our Agape sister, Rosalie Wiherin, who is going in the hospital June 23rd to have a growth removed from her eye. She is facing the possibility of blindness from a retina detachment. Rosalie and her family have been very faithful members of Agape. She has been in a wheelchair for 30 years. Our prayers are with her during this surgery and throughout her recuperation. We pray for a miracle from God for her healing. Rosalie is a perfect example of how the devil uses diabetes to attack a person's body. Please be in prayer for Rosalie, her husband Walter, and her daughter Elisa.

All of the events above will have taken place before you receive this newsletter. However, please say a prayer to thank God for the new babies, for His comfort and blessing on the Bender family, and for His continued healing of those who have undergone surgery.

— Bonnie



The Highest Accountability

For what purpose – to what end – do you intend to apply CAMEM Love-gifts, as the Lord Himself makes them available to you? We are reminded in Hebrews 4:12,13 [NIV]

¹²For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

¹³Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

As to how CAMEM Love-gifts are used, each Seeker's accountability is to the Lord, not to CAMEM. With this accountability in mind, these words are offered for your edification, without judgment or condemnation.

Quite a few Seekers (19%) have requested reversion of their Love-gifts. By far, the most popular amount reverted is 100%. That's okay with the ministry. However, it may surprise you to learn that Love-gift reversion was not a part of CAMEM's original design. It was added in order to accommodate frequent requests to do so.

By design, CAMEM implements a beautiful balance between long-range growth of CHF and immediate distribution of benefits. Reversion distorts that balance heavily in favor of growth, postponing the receiving of Love-gifts.

Not everyone tells CAMEM why they elect reversion; others volunteer their reasons. Let's consider the implications of the two most common reasons given for reversion.

"I don't need them right now." At first, this may sound like the perfect reason to request Love-gift reversion. But is it really? If you don't

need Love-gifts for yourself, then doesn't that also confess that you are completely free to apply those Love-gifts toward ministry right now?

"If I let them build, I can do a lot more good later." Yes, it's true. Reversion is a powerful multiplier of Harvest Units, and ultimately, of Love-gifts. But if you are reluctant to be generous little-by-little, is it likely that you will instantly begin practicing generosity on a grand scale at some point in the future? (See Luke 16:10.)

Suppose you planned to revert Love-gifts for three years, waiting for them to become "significant." In a world where \$20 can feed a child for a month, how many hungry eyes will be turned away before you're ready to share? Five dollars can buy a net to protect from the deadly bite of the malaria mosquito that kills as many as 3 million people every year. How many will perish while you wait? What if Jesus returns at the end of the second year, and finds you've done nothing at all? How would you answer Him?

Fact: While reversion is a powerful accelerator of H.U. growth, it shifts the balance and delays your ability to minister to others now. I'm not suggesting that Love-gifts should never be reverted. But, if you do choose reversion, be sure to examine the motives of your heart and to seek the Lord's leadership.

When Jesus comes in His glory, He is not likely to be interested in how much money we have accumulated or the size of the checks we receive from CAMEM each month. Our King is much more likely to speak to us about how well we have attended the needs of His little ones with the resources He has placed in our hands. (Consider Matthew 25:31-46.)

— SYSTEMS MANAGER

Special Provision for New FC's in Effect Now

As an encouragement to small and medium-sized churches, a special provision is in effect through the end of 1999. New Founding Church positions with an initial donation of \$3000 or less, will be given full Harvest Unit credit for the initial donation. The usual \$1500 expansion donation will be waived under this special arrangement. In effect, this will quadruple the monthly Direct Harvest (projected at \$200, instead of \$50) that would normally be available to a Founding Church starting with a \$3000 donation!

NOTE: All expansion donations will apply if the Founding Church elects to give additional donations. This special arrangement only applies to churches that have been meeting regularly for at least three months. It does not apply to other organizations, missionaries, or groups within a local church.

CAMEM Harvest Fund

Gained 21.4% in

June, 1999

***WE GIVE THANKS, O LORD, FOR
YOUR IMMENSE GRACE TO US!***

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Just in case you haven't heard, all Founding Partner positions in CAMEM have been filled.

Just for Laffs

Every now and then, we could all use a little laughter to brighten our day. These two humorous pieces gave me a chuckle; maybe they'll do the same for you or for someone you know.

Oops! Pardon That Typo!

A business man from Wisconsin went on a business trip to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Upon arrival, he immediately plugged his laptop into the hotel room port and sent a short e-mail back home to his wife, Jennifer Johnson, at <jenn.john@xxxxx.net>. Unfortunately, in his haste, he mistyped a character and the e-mail ended up going to <jean.john@xxxxx.net>, a Jean Johnson in Duluth, Michigan, whose husband, a preacher, had just passed away and been buried that day.

The preacher's wife took one look at the e-mail and promptly fainted. The e-mail read, "Arrived safely; but it sure is hot down here!"

One Wish

As a man was walking along a California beach, he stumbled across an old lamp. After picking it up and rubbing it, out popped a genie.

"Okay, okay," said the genie. "So, you released me from the lamp. Big deal! This is the fourth time I've been disturbed this month!"

"Gosh, I'm sorry," said the man, "but according to legend...."

"Yeah, yeah, I know," interrupted the genie. "You want three wishes, right? Well, let me tell

you something, Mister. I'm getting a little sick of these wishes, you hear? So you only get one wish! That's all. Understand?"

After thinking about it for a while, the man muttered, "Well, you know, I've always wanted to go to Hawaii. But I'm afraid to fly, and I get very seasick. Could you build me a bridge to Hawaii, Mr. Genie, so I could drive over to vacation?"

Laughing sarcastically, the genie said, "Mister, that's impossible! Think of the logistics of that! How would the supports ever reach the bottom of the Pacific? And just think of how much concrete it would take! Oh, and what about the steel? No, no, no! Think up another wish. And rush it up, will you?"

Feeling somewhat foolish, the man tried to think up a really good wish. Finally, he did.

"Well, I've been married and divorced four times," he confided to the genie. "And, my wives always said that I don't care and that I'm insensitive. So, I wish that I could understand women..., and know how they feel inside..., and know what they're thinking when they give me the silent treatment..., and know why they're crying..., and know what they really want when they say 'I don't want anything, Honey...' and know how to make them truly happy...."

"Whoa! Whoa! Stop!" interrupted the genie. "Do you want that bridge with two lanes or four?"

Keep JESUS in Your Heart.

May God Bless You and Yours,

— *Brother Dave*



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