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REVIEW

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REVIEW

FROM THE PRESIDENT

TIM LAMBERT



The issue of parental rights continues to be a battleground in the family law courts of the state of Texas and these situations highlight the critical need for the election of fair and impartial judges who know and apply the law rather than using their position to enforce their personal opinions on families.

In an ongoing Houston divorce case, District Judge Denise Pratt has in effect allowed a back door grandparent access case by a grandfather who is the guardian of his son (the father) who is totally incapacitated. The fit mother of the medically fragile and very disabled child involved objects to the guardian's involvement with her child.

In spite of the fact that the grandfather states that he is not seeking grandparent access, the court—without any evidence required by law that the mother is unfit—has ruled that the mother must surrender her child for visitation outside of her custody and over her objections to the grandparents who “supervise” the visitation between the child and his totally incapacitated father and who actually have possession and control of the child during the visits.

As is often the case in grandparent access cases, the grandparents routinely ignore the mother's instructions of care for the child while the child is in their possession.

In fact, the child was injured while in the grandparents' care during a visit. The judge has also removed a requirement that a nurse be present during the visits and now requires the mother to consult with the grandfather in regard to issues related to the child. It is not a surprise that the grandfather has sought increasing authority over the child, essentially functioning as a co-parent.

The attorneys representing the mother point out in court papers that the provisions of the Texas Probate Code limit the authority of a guardian of the incapacitated person, of the estate, or both. A guardian of the person may only make decisions for his ward's physical health and well-being (i.e., food, shelter, medical treatment). The Texas Supreme Court has ruled that a guardian of the person may not exercise his ward's purely personal rights. The powers of the guardian of the estate are even more restricted. Exercising a ward's parental rights is not among the powers that a guardian of the person or of the estate in Texas may exercise.

The implications of Judge Denise Pratt's temporary orders are disturbing. Under the current temporary orders, a private professional guardian of a totally incapacitated father could request and obtain visitation with the child and the father at the guardian's house, over the mom's objections. The mom could be required to confer with that professional guardian (a total stranger) on issues concerning the child. As absurd as that sounds, especially in light of Troxel, this is the scenario created by Judge Denise Pratt's current temporary orders.

Why is Judge Denise Pratt in this case making such rulings? As I asked myself that question, I did a little research into this judge and found that criminal complaints have been made against this Houston Judge who is up for reelection in November 2014. In fact, the Houston Chronicle has published a story about the criminal complaint filed against her. The Houston Press ran a story last week noting that 32 attorneys have signed a letter calling on her to resign. The story notes a recent mandamus decision from the Fourteenth Court of Appeals concerning Judge Pratt's failure to rule on a father's motion to enforce visitation with his eldest daughter. As a consequence of Judge Pratt's failure to rule, the father had not seen his daughter for over a year. The article notes: “A three-judge panel of the 14th Court of Appeals apparently agreed [with the father's position]: in their opinion, the judges stated that Pratt hadn't ruled for more than ten months on a visitation motion, and that “a parent's right to access to his child is a fundamental liberty interest more precious than property rights.” An ABC affiliate in Houston also did a story on Judge Denise Pratt falsifying court records.

Finally, if all that were not enough, a Houston-area family law attorney has noted that, according to a recent Houston Bar Association Judicial Poll, Judge Denise Pratt's ratings were the worst that any judge has ever received in the history of the survey. 77% of attorneys rated her poor on following the law and 80% said that she did not rule decisively and timely. Clearly the 311th District Court needs a new judge!

This is not the only case in which we have seen egregious actions by local judges in regard to parental rights and we are working hard with local groups who are vetting local candidates, including judges, as we are in vetting state-wide candidates. This is critical in the efforts to protect and restore parental rights in Texas. We must hold judges accountable at the ballot box.

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We Hold These Truths to Be Self Evident?

by Michael McHugh

*I*t is not uncommon for parents contemplating home education to ask, "Is home education legal in my state?" or perhaps, "How can I be sure that the state will grant me the freedom to educate my own children?" In light of these familiar questions, one more question needs to be asked: "How many parents in America today still believe that they have been endowed by their Creator with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?"

The sad reality is that a significant number of parents in the United States have lost the meaning of liberty as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Nowhere is this more plain than in the area of parental rights in education.

The U.S. Supreme Court, as far back as 1925, confirmed that parents, not the state, have the right to choose by what means children will be educated. In the case of *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, the Supreme Court affirmed that:

The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments in this Union repose excludes any general powers of the state to standardize children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations.

Too many parents today assume that they do not have the inherent or natural right to educate their children because they have never been taught the true source and scope of their inalienable rights. Only one or two generations ago most U.S. citizens understood that they had the right as sovereign citizens to do virtually any activity unless it endangered the safety of another citizen or violated the public peace. In modern American society, just the opposite is true. Thanks in large measure to

the mis-education that most Americans received in government schools, they now commonly believe that the only activities that can be legitimately pursued are those that are specifically enumerated in state or federal law. In other words, the mindset of parents and most people is, "The state giveth, the state taketh away, blessed be the name of the state."

People today, including many Christian parents, unconsciously believe that it is illegal to exercise any conviction (no matter how basic or natural) unless government officials first enact a law that specifically sanctions a particular activity, e.g., home education. It is frightening to think how many Americans fail to recognize that they do not need to request special permission from the state before they exercise a fundamental right already granted by God and secured under the U.S. Constitution.

It is easy for U. S. citizens to forget that their Founding Fathers fought and died to give them a government whose primary purpose was to defend and secure the rights of the people—not the rights of government bureaucrats. The original intent of the framers of the Constitution was to limit the size, scope, and jurisdiction of the state and federal governments. For this reason, the only just powers that government officials were supposed to possess were those that the people themselves decided to grant them. The American system succeeded in empowering its citizens with an unprecedented degree of liberty precisely because it was built on the premise that government was to be of the people, by the people, and for the people.

In order to prevent anarchy, the constitutional/republican form of American government did provide through the legislative process a means whereby laws could be enacted at the state and federal levels limiting certain specific privileges of American citizens. However, it was never the framers' intention to grant legislators unbridled power over the rights of the people. Legislators are, after all, nothing more than representatives of the people, elected to protect and uphold the constitutional rights of the citizens they serve. Perhaps President Ronald Reagan stated it best when he reminded the American people during his first inaugural address, "We are a nation that has a government—not the other way around."

Indeed, as one reads the Declaration of Independence, it is plain to see that the Founding Fathers believed that if any form of government in America became destructive to the cause of individual liberty by engaging in consistent efforts to undermine the rights of the people, it was "the right and the duty of the people to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security." The right of U.S. citizens to rebel against tyrants informs and precedes all of the rights enumerated in the Constitution. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "We the people are the

rightful masters of both Congress and the courts—not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution."

The right of parents to teach their own children does not come from men, but from God. That is why it is rightly classified as an inalienable right, for it was not established by man's law, but God's—from the beginning of human history. The men who wrote the Declaration of Independence genuinely believed that men were "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." To them, fundamental rights were not to be subject to the whims and fancy of fickle politicians, so the framers placed these rights above and beyond the reach of civil government officials.

If the right to home school is to remain secure for future generations, parents living in the early part of the twenty-first century must be willing to boldly stand up for the sacred liberties that God has ordained for man. Parents who are unwilling to stand up for their God-given liberties do not deserve them. As the faithful minister the Reverend Levi Whisner once stated, "He who will not use his freedom to preserve his freedom, does not deserve his freedom." May Almighty God, the only wise Lawgiver, grant His people the courage to stand fast as those who have been set free to serve King Jesus.



For over thirty years, Michael McHugh has worked as a teacher, lecturer, home school program administrator, and textbook author/editor for the Christian Liberty Academy in Arlington Heights, Illinois. Mr. McHugh is also the founder and director of a publishing ministry known as Great Light Publications. Over the last three decades, he has written numerous articles that have appeared in newsletters and scholarly journals across the US and abroad.

Michael McHugh is a graduate of Whitefield College, and holds a BS degree in the field of Christian education.

As a home school father, Michael lives in the Chicago area with his wife and seven children. Mr. McHugh and his wife were married in 1984 and have been actively engaged in homeschooling their children since 1988.





★ WHEN DOOLITTLE ★ ★ ★ DID A LOT ★ ★

by Pat Harrell

On my laptop screen is an image of four living veterans of the 1942 Doolittle Raid on Tokyo. The old airmen gathered in April 2012 to commemorate the heroism and success of a mission seventy years earlier.

These ninety-plus-year-old guys are my heroes. When they were twenty-somethings they chose to give up their lives for their brothers and for the future of American history. There ain't no greater love than that.

Dads, you heard of December 7, 1941, when the Japanese Empire attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, killing 2400 Americans and wounding another 1300. If you are a World War II geek like me, you remember the April 18, 1942, retaliatory attack on Tokyo by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army Air Force. Seventy-nine young men, led by one old man, Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, chose to fulfill President Franklin Roosevelt's vision of responding to the Pearl Harbor attack. The Doolittle Raid was meant to increase America's morale and decrease the Japanese Empire's confidence.

The Doolittle Raid began as a "suicide mission," with its combat-untested B-25B bomber launching from an aircraft carrier (the USS Hornet), with no fighter plane escort, and landing in Japanese-occupied Eastern China. Then it got worse.

About 170 nautical miles before the desired launch point, the USS Hornet was spotted by a Japanese Navy patrol boat, which sent a warning message to its commanders before the U.S. Navy sank it. The Doolittle Raiders chose to launch their mission earlier than planned, knowing they would not have safe landings in Eastern China. Why? Because they were committed to changing American history.

As a home school dad, I ask myself, am I committed to change American history? Have I raised my children in a manner where they will want to risk their lives to change American history? To see their friends and neighbors trust Christ as Lord and Savior? Have I made history-changing disciples in my own family? I got my answer. And I didn't like it.



On a Sunday afternoon our neighbors were outside throwing a football. So I ambled over and struck up a conversation with my neighbors, hoping to increase our relationship so, someday, I can discuss spiritual matters with them, introduce them to Jesus, and see some of American history change.

My sons were outside as well, joyfully scootering down the hill in front of our house. I asked my sons to scooter over to a neighbor kid and play together. My sons wouldn't. Actually, they couldn't, because they didn't know how.

In seven years at our current home, I have done little with my children to build neighborhood relationships. Sure, I've spoken with and helped my neighbors, but I never engaged my children in my "mission" to change American history in our neighborhood. Now, when pressed into service, my sons were not prepared.

My kids have Mormon friends who are fun and talented. Without a saving relationship with Christ, my kids' friends are doomed in the afterlife. Yet my kids don't have the urgency to pray their friends out of hell. Have I shown my children how to share the love of Christ? Not really.

Doolittle's Raiders knew their mission had little chance of success, but they launched anyway to change American history. Only one of the sixteen B-25B bombers landed safely. The other fifteen crash-landed, with many Raiders killed, maimed, captured, and tortured.

After the Doolittle Raid, the Japanese Navy changed strategy, moving the strength of their fleet to the Island of Midway. Japan planned to lure the remainder of the post-Pearl Harbor U.S. Navy into a trap. Instead, at the June 1942 Battle of Midway, the U.S. Navy sank four Japanese aircraft carriers; the Japanese Navy never recovered. Within six months of Pearl Harbor the Japanese Empire's morale and navy were destroyed. The Doolittle

Raiders chose to risk their lives and they changed American history.

My wife is another one of my heroes. She never flew a bomber on a suicide mission. She did insist our children bake pies for Thanksgiving and deliver them to the neighbors and demonstrate the love of Christ.

She wants our children to change American history in our neighborhood.

Dads, it is good to teach American history to your children. It is better to teach your children how to change American history.

Finally, dads, teach your children about the Doolittle Raid and God's providence on the Raiders:

- Study the life of Staff Sgt. Jacob DeShazer, a Doolittle Raider captured and tortured for forty months. In 1948 he returned to Japan for thirty years as a missionary for Christ.
- Read about John Birch, an American missionary for Christ stationed in China, who helped Doolittle Raiders escape.
- Learn about Mitsuo Fuchida, leader of the attack on Pearl Harbor, who later trusted Christ and spoke for Him in post-war Japan.

If you have a moment, please send an email to ImperfectFather@gmail.com. I'd love to hear how your family is changing American history.



Pat and Belinda Harrell have home schooled since 1995. They have five jolly children—and the loudest house on the block. Please send your thoughts on this article to Pat at ImperfectFather@gmail.com. He promises to write back. Read more about being an Imperfect Father at www.ImperfectFather.com.

"It is good to teach American history to your children. It is better to teach your children how to change American history."

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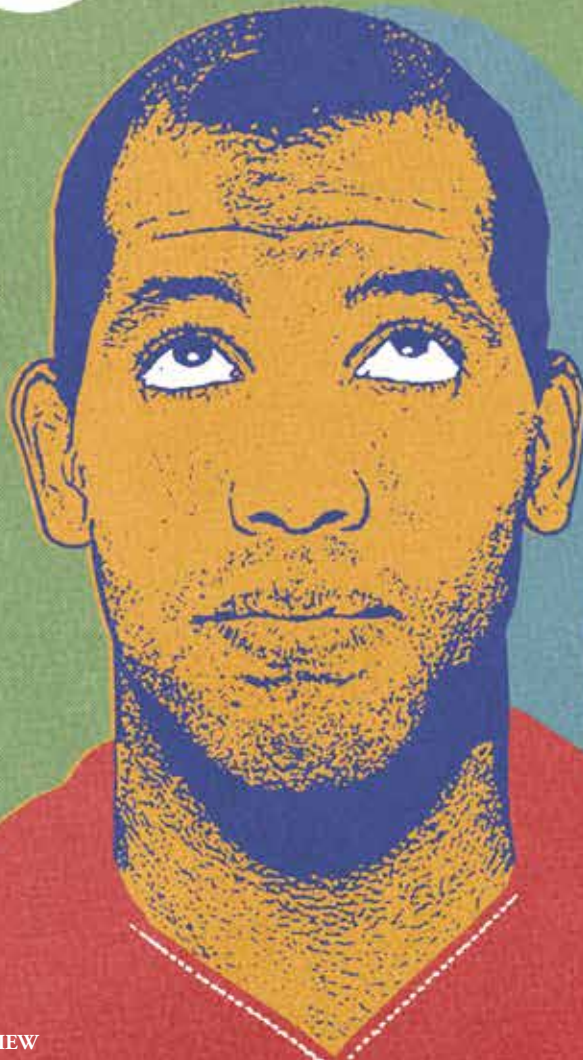
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TEXAS HOME SCHOOL COALITION REVIEW • 11

Let's Think About That...

by Brian Shepherd

Part of the growing-up process should include learning to think properly. We live in an age where children (and adults) are perpetually blasted with messages of so-called “truths” by way of television, the Internet, radio, music, and the written word. The secular world would have us believe that the pedagogues, the scientists, the Hollywood elite, and the allegedly scholarly media have practically every issue completely figured out and that they are consistently engaged in correct thinking. Yet, the fact is they often fail on both points. What follows are some suggestions for teaching your children (and yourself, if need be) to think in a manner that usually leads to good conclusions. These “rules” will work with a child of almost any age as long as he is able to think at some level (i.e., is not severely cognitively impaired).



1. The first rule of good thinking should always be to filter everything through the Bible.

It is remarkable how much stinkin' thinkin' can be identified by this simple rule. Colossians 2:8 commands the believer, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Just remember to search for God's intended meaning from Scripture and not a twisted interpretation designed to support your own personal agenda. Praying for guidance from the Holy Spirit is very useful in this instance.

2. Encourage your children to ask a lot of questions. This rule is particularly good to remember when you are tired and do not feel like answering your children's incessant questions. Most children are naturally curious, and that character trait should not be quashed. If you do not know the answer to his question, tell him so and show him how he might look it up himself. Furthermore, demonstrate how you go about discerning the veracity of the resources upon which you rely in your quest for the answers to your queries.

3. Ask your children a lot of questions. Naturally, a home school parent is likely to ask questions of his children often. However, there is a difference between asking a question to see if your child is listening (or has learned something) and asking a question to see if she can conceive a reasonable answer to a difficult (and perhaps unknowable) question. These types of questions often begin, "Why do you think. . . ." For example, "Why do you think Jesus is never recorded in the Bible as addressing His earthly mother as 'Mother,' or 'Mom,' or even, 'Mary'? He always addressed her as 'Woman.'" Most children (and many adults) would respond, "I don't know" and would wait for the answer from the questioner. With children it is often a good strategy to press for some kind of response. The purpose is to see if they can come up with a reasonable answer. If they respond that it is because the moon is made out of cheese (smart-aleck response), simply smile and continue asking for a more reasonable answer. Do not expect fantastic results the first time you try it, but if you use this technique repeatedly, it is likely to yield a thoughtful child—especially when combined with the other rules listed in this article. Do not forget to eventually share your opinion of the answer and why you think it is so, but also affirm your thoughtful child's response.

4. Teach your children to listen and read critically. It is likely that one could find an article on the Internet to support just about any position. Children must be taught to look for an author's assumptions behind his or her conclusions. Creative scholars are often very good at hiding their assumptions and sometimes use logical fallacies to support bad thinking. However, writers often inadvertently divulge their flawed thinking quite clearly. For example, in the university-level text *Isotopes: Principles and Applications* by Gunter Faure, the author states, "By the middle of the nineteenth century, geologists seemed to be secure in their conviction that the Earth was indeed very old. . . ." (pp. 3-4). Notice the single word "seemed." This word elucidates that the author is relying upon an assumption to make his presuppositional point that he thinks the earth is very old. Interestingly, this thing that "seemed" to be true mysteriously turns into a "fact" (without proof) for the remainder of the 897-page tome.

5. Teach biblical logic. There are a lot of good books on logic, but they are not necessarily biblical. Also, many of these books teach mathematical methods to determine logical fallacies, which can be challenging for the

person who does not easily embrace mathematical concepts. Nevertheless, there are some excellent books that teach simple, useful methods for evaluating claims without the use of math. When combined with Rule One (above), and with guidance from the Holy Spirit, you cannot go wrong. Isaiah 1:18 makes it clear that God endorses good reasoning: "'Come now, and let us reason together,' saith the Lord."

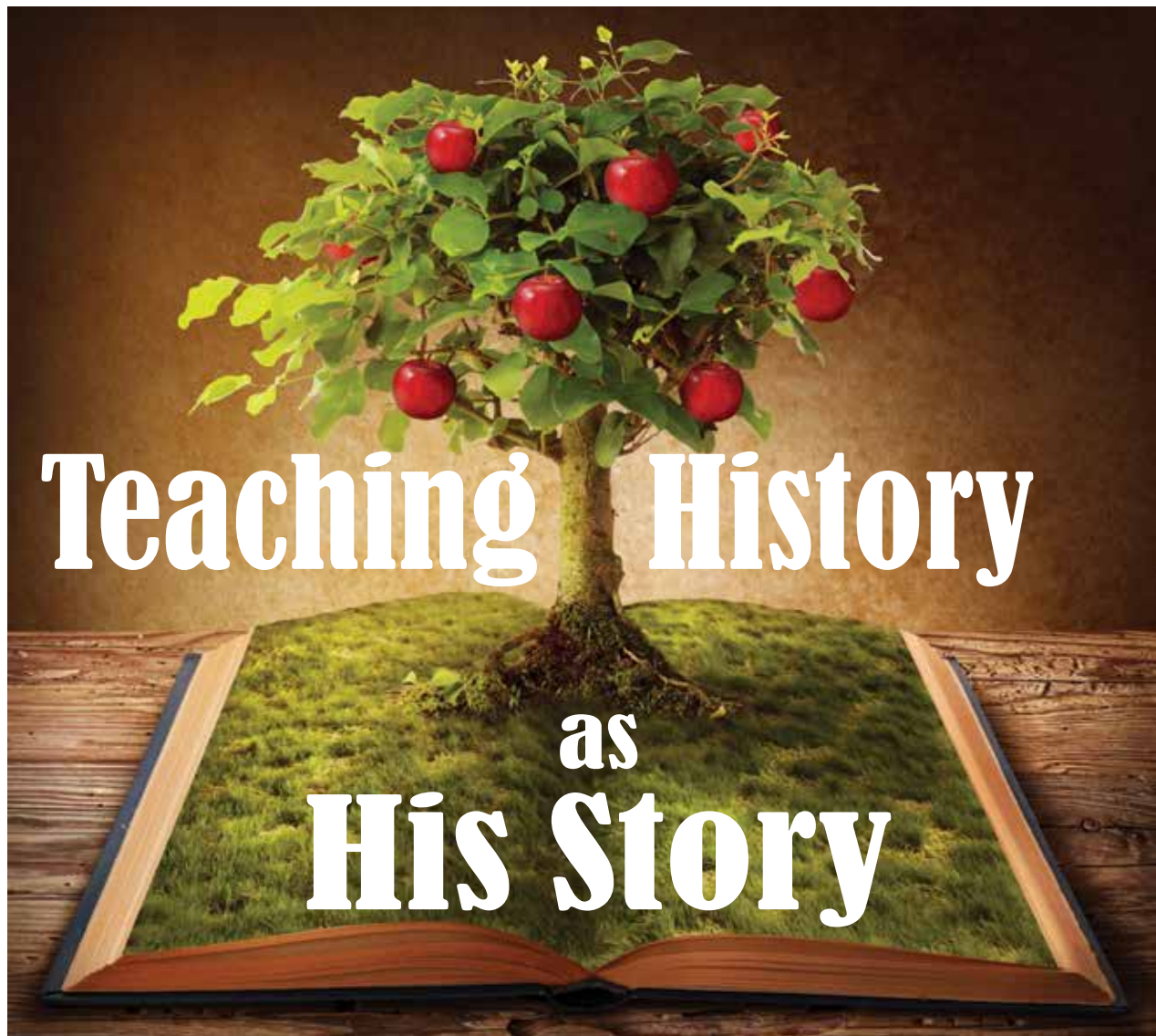
6. Teach your children to consider the source. It is a logical fallacy to determine the truthfulness of a position by assuming that anything that comes from a bad source is wrong. Even a broken analog clock is correct twice a day. It is equally wrong to assume that because a trusted source is usually right, he or it must always be right. Nevertheless, it is a useful exercise to teach your children that some sources are usually wrong and others are generally correct. Also, it is best to teach that no man or woman is absolutely trustworthy as a source (only our tripartite God owns that distinction) because we are all fallen. You should not even trust your mother, father, pastor, seminary professor, or Sunday school teacher as an absolute source of truth. Everything should be filtered through the Bible (see Rule One). Many, many good, God-fearing men and women put much too much trust in these named parties—sometimes to their great embarrassment. It should likewise be easy to see that a secular individual is even more likely to be wrong in many aspects of his thinking. That is why it is usually easy for the discerning Christian to identify the abundance of propaganda and poor logic uttered by most news persons on television.

7. Teach your older children to check the footnotes. Non-fiction often cites its source material by way of footnotes. It is a most useful exercise to get your children to acquire some of the books or magazines cited and to verify the accuracy of the author's claims. Unfortunately, scholars often stretch truths to build their positions, even (way too often) in biblical reference books, in the sciences, in textbooks, and in technical papers. Teach your children to be like the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and to search the Scriptures, verify facts, and check the facts behind the facts.

By following these seven simple rules, and with prayer, your children will grow to be mature and healthy skeptics of anything that does not proceed from God's Word. Remember: Nothing trumps the Bible—not science, not humanistic philosophy, not number of degrees held, and certainly not one's I.Q.



Brian Shepherd is a home school dad, Sunday school teacher, and certified financial planner. He lives in Garland with his wife Phyllis and two children, Adrian and Hannah. Brian has a B.S. in chemistry from Texas A&M University and a master of biblical apologetics and Christian education from the Institute for Creation Research. He teaches science in his family's home school and enjoys reading nonfiction and traveling in his spare time. He can be contacted by email at TheShepherdFlock@Verizon.net. He welcomes emails with queries and comments on biblical and scientific topics as well as about home schooling.



Teaching History as His Story

by Lynn Dean

When I was a student history seemed boring. Over and done. Pointless lists of dates and wars and people long dead—events that had little to do with my own life. History only became fascinating when I began to see events as scenes in HIS story (HIStory)—God revealing His ultimate purposes through time. As it turns out, God is a master storyteller!

Most classic stories begin, “Once upon a time” (or, “In the beginning, God”) by describing an original story-world—an ideal world in which often the key characters do not appreciate what they have until it is lost. We identify with characters who want things they cannot have. Sometimes their desires set in motion an unintended series of events, and other times they are victims of some evil force, but however the crisis comes about, our characters are shoved into a situation they are unprepared to face. They have a problem that must be solved, and life cannot go back to the way it was before. Just as adventure enticed Bilbo to leave the shire and boredom lured four children through a wardrobe and into Narnia, Adam and Eve were tempted to abandon their walks with God in His garden and instead decided good and evil for themselves.

The longest part of any story is the middle. This is the part where the characters change and grow. When they first recognize their crisis, they

try one scheme after another to escape. They experience conflict, hardship, discouragement, and finally reach the dark moment when they realize there is only one way out. Bilbo struggled with fear and self-doubt until he summoned the courage to face his dragon. Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy fled from the White Witch until they met Aslan and gained the strength to vanquish the witch.

Mankind is now in the middle of God’s story. Unable to return to Eden, we need to be redeemed and restored to relationship with our Creator. As any good storyteller will tell you, every event in the middle of the story builds in some way toward the happily-ever-after ending. God’s story is no different. Every event, past and present, works together for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Such is the journey of each civilization and each individual. Of course, the Author and Perfecter of our faith has known from the beginning how HIStory will end.

HIStory is wonderfully complex, repeating universal themes on multiple levels. When we look for those themes, HIStory automatically brings biblical truth into personal perspective. We see, for example, that choices have consequences and that we often make poor choices without realizing it. (“*There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death.*”

Proverbs 14:12, 16:25) We realize that just as Adam and Eve had access to God's wisdom as they walked with Him in the garden, we have access to it today as we make our own decisions. ("If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." James 1:5) We understand that there is a correlation between obedience and blessing for individuals and for nations. ("If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14) Many such concepts are illustrated over and over in HIStory—so often that once we grasp them, we see them everywhere. These are the concepts we must look for and train our children to recognize.

Fortunately, we live in a nation and in a state founded on biblical principles. Many revisionists would argue, but facts are stubborn things. If we read original-source documents that contain our Founders' thoughts in their own words, their motivations are plain enough. Were they perfect? No, they were human. Was their faith orthodox? Not always. Though God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, "now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we will know fully just as we also have been fully known." (I Corinthians 13:12) We are each a product of our own era, but this is exactly the way God reveals Himself to bring about individual growth and to redeem a people for Himself.

The blessings Americans have experienced are a consequence of our Founders' determination to establish a new nation built on godly principles

and the faithfulness of successive generations. For this we are grateful, but it is God who blesses, prospers, and saves. Be careful not to confuse patriotism with faith. HIStory is about His people: Israel and Christendom. If we hope to present His full story, we will have to acknowledge that no good character is entirely without faults, just as no villain is entirely without hope. It is the same with nations. The hero of HIStory is not man, but God. His plan is to redeem for Himself not only America, but people from every nation.

I encourage you to approach whatever era of history you teach in the context of HIStory—the story of a God worthy of glory (Revelation 4:11), a Brother sent to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10), a Father in search of people who will worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:23) God tells wonderful stories, and in HIStory He has given us a wonderful gift.



Lynn Dean was a reluctant historian. Bored with schoolbooks that chronicled battle dates and dead people, she feared inflicting mind-numbing data on her own students. Fortunately, she discovered the classic appeal of storytelling--adventure sagas about real people who struggled to overcome obstacles while pursuing their dreams. For more than a decade Lynn has combined unit studies, field trips, and quality literature to create unique and memorable experiences in discovery learning.

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P R I M A R Y E N D O R S E M E N T S

For the 2014 election cycle, THSC is launching the THSC Rangers program to locate, vet, and place more than 1000 home school students and graduates into conservative campaigns across the state. THSC's policy team measures candidates according to the Christian principles that we believe in so strongly. We do not make endorsements lightly. Our teams are constructed of students and activists who have demonstrated their commitment to protecting the home school community and who have the expertise and political savvy to vet candidates based on their positions, as opposed to their popularity.

Our volunteers perform the following activities on a daily basis:

- ~ Sending and reviewing questionnaires ~
- ~ Writing press releases and endorsements ~
- ~ Questioning campaigns on THSC's issues ~
- ~ Researching candidates ~

Policy Team volunteers are chosen for their experience in speech and debate, their knowledge of government, and their ability to research and analyze accurately, in addition to their ability to work as part of a team and to follow instructions. Each political candidate listed below has shown their commitment to protecting the Texas home schooling community and has earned THSC's full support. For an updated list of endorsements, please visit our website at THSC.org.

In the wake of the success experienced with the THSC Watchmen program in 2013, THSC will roll out a pilot program in 2014 that will have unprecedented potential. For the 2014 election cycle, THSC is constructing a program to locate, vet, and place more than 1000 home school students and graduates into conservative campaigns across the state. Applications will be reviewed on their individual merits. Although specific responsibilities will remain different for each campaign, interns will most likely assist though block walking, phone banking, data analysis, or event coordination.

Participation in the program offers multiple benefits to interns. In addition to the invaluable experience gained from working in the political sector, interns may receive high school and/or college credit for their work. (Details vary with each college). Interns who demonstrate excellence in performing their duties have the potential for future employment with some campaigns. Please visit our website at THSC.org/Rangers for details about how you can participate.

★ STATEWIDE ELECTIONS ★

Dan Patrick	Lieutenant Governor
Ken Paxton	Attorney General
Glenn Hegar	Comptroller
Sid Miller	Agricultural Commissioner

★ TEXAS STATE SENATE ★

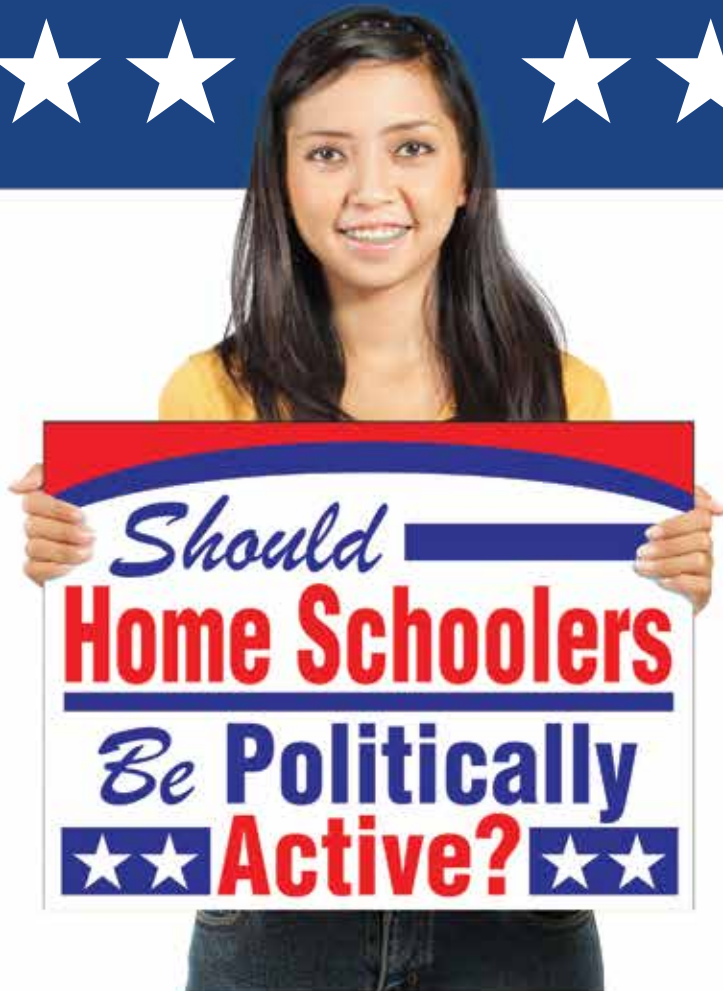
Bob Hall	State District 2
Steve Toth	State District 4
Van Taylor	State District 8
Konni Burton	State District 10
Donald Huffines	State District 16
Donna Campbell	State District 25

★ JUDICIAL RACES ★

Phil Johnson	Texas Supreme Court
John Schmude	247th Family District Court
Ray Ballmann	JP, Bosque-Precinct 1

★ TEXAS STATE HOUSE ★

Bryan Hughes	House District 5
David Simpson	House District 7
T.J. Fabby	House District 10
Ted Seago	House District 16
James White	House District 19
Jason Isaac	House District 45
Molly White	House District 55
Danny Pelton	House District 59
Cullen Crisp	House District 60
Read King	House District 64
Matt Shaheen	House District 66
Jeff Leach	House District 67
James Frank	House District 69
Jodie Laubenberg	House District 89
Stephanie Klick	House District 91
Jonathan Stickland	House District 92
Matt Krause	House District 93
Tony Tenderholt	House District 94
Bill Zedler	House District 96
Giovanni Capriglione	House District 98
Rodney Anderson	House District 105
Jared Patterson	House District 112
Cindy Burkett	House District 113
Matt Rinaldi	House District 115



by Lori Hatcher

"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

It was a surreal experience. On my right was U. S. Sen. Lindsay Graham. On my left was U. S. Rep. Joe Wilson. Completing the trio was Senate hopeful Jim DeMint. And me. Me, who three months earlier thought that Wilson was a tennis ball company, graham's went with chocolate to make s'mores, and de mint was what you ate after de meal. Now I listened to their plans for our state and our country and asked questions that were reasonably intelligent. To what did I owe this newfound political savvy? My fifteen-year-old politically interested home schooled daughter.

Interested in the political process and wanting to earn her high school credit in government, my daughter made contact with several local candidates running for political office and volunteered her services. The rest, as they say, is history.

Smart candidates recognize the gold mine of time, energy, and enthusiasm that belong to most home schoolers. They realize that it does not take a rocket scientist to hand out stickers in a parade, staple yard signs together, prepare mailers, and waive signs at polling places. Each hour my daughter worked counted toward elusive Carnegie units for government. Each hour she worked taught her valuable things about the political process.

More than that though, our whole family learned that our elected officials really do care about the people they serve. Each of these men took the

time to thank my daughter for her service as warmly as if she had donated much more than time to their campaigns. They took time out of their busy schedules to tell stories of when they were fifteen years old, working on their first campaigns. They recognized that the young people volunteering with them are the future—citizens, voters, and possibly elected officials—and they planted seeds of that vision in them.

Now, eight years later, my daughter works for one of the same candidates for whom she campaigned so long ago. She lives on Capitol Hill and sometimes leads tours for home schooling families just like ours. Exploring the field of government during high school birthed a desire in her heart to be a part of the governmental process rather than just complain about it. As a believer in Christ, she has an opportunity to be a light in a very dark place and an influence on those around her.

If your family has never been involved in a political campaign, I urge you to consider it today. Choose a candidate whose views mirror yours and give their campaign headquarters a call. It is a great way to meet the men and women who represent us at the school board, city council, county commission, statehouse, and in Washington. Your children will be on their way to becoming an active part in our country's democracy, and you might even learn what House district you live in once and for all.



Lori Hatcher is author of *Joy in the Journey - Encouragement for Homeschooling Moms* and the blog, *Hungry for God; Starving for Time* <http://www.lorihatcher.com>, hatcherx4@sc.rr.com



Application Questions

Have you and your family been passive or involved in the political process?
Have you ever considered volunteering to help a local candidate run for office?

Which candidates' or currently elected officials' platforms most closely align with a biblical worldview on current issues?

Is it important to you that your children learn the political process?

Action Step for This Week

Teach your children how to find a candidate or incumbent within your area whose political views most closely align with your own. Contact his or her office to volunteer.

Prayer of Commitment:

"Lord, it is so easy to be passive when it comes to government. There is a lot I do not understand, and sometimes it seems that only the immoral and dishonest get elected. Please show me how You would like for our family to be a part of the political process. Help us to find a godly man or woman like Daniel or Mordecai to come alongside with our prayers, our time, and our effort."



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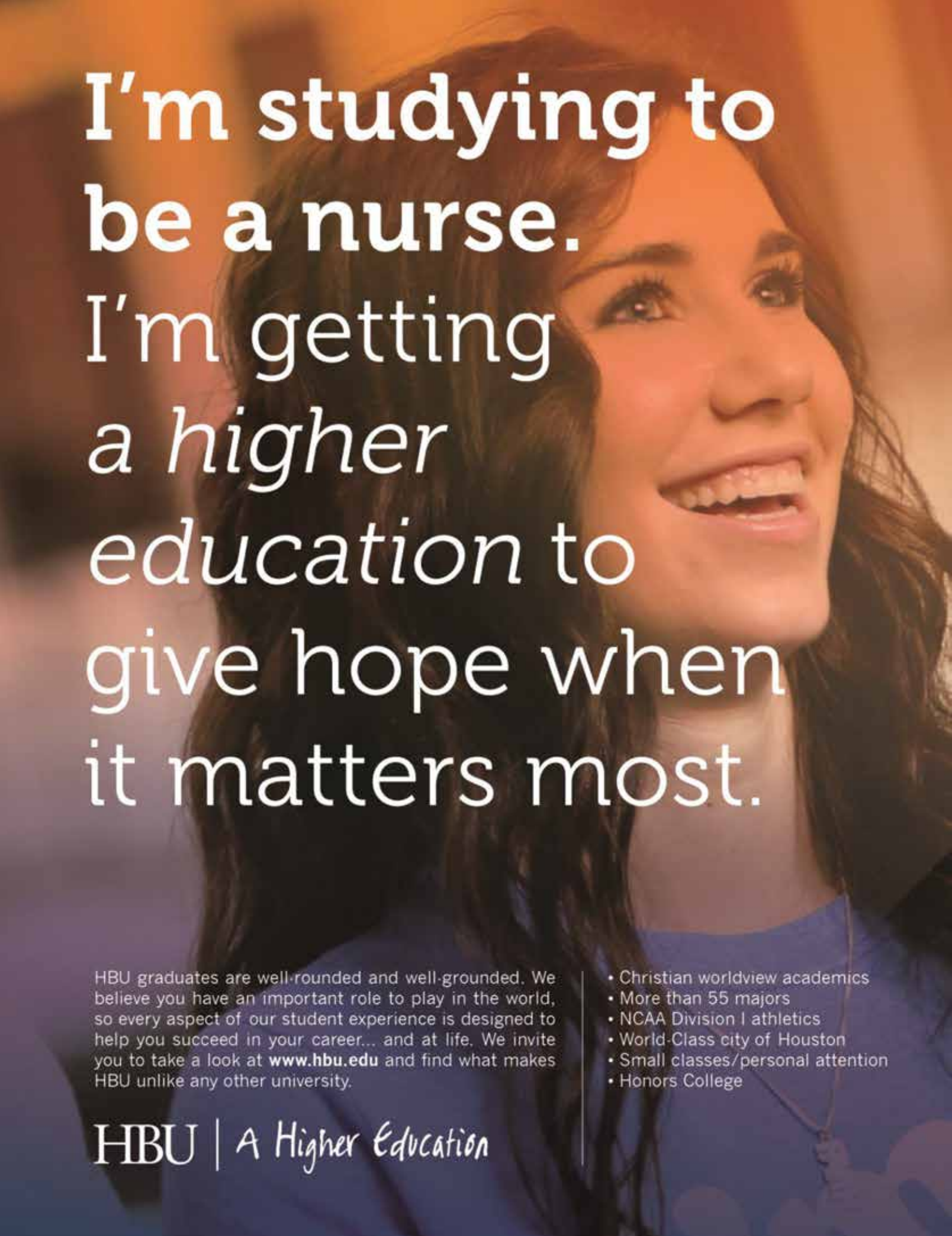


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- DEFEND TEXAS AGAINST WASHINGTON

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In February of 1776 our nation was on the cusp of a great adventure. The patriot author, Thomas Paine, had recently published “Common Sense,” calling for independence. Unrest had been building with England’s increasingly exploitative use of the colonies’ resources, and Paine saw this as a moment to seize—not only to attain freedom but to become a beacon for others. He wrote, “We have it in our power to begin the world anew. . . . America shall make a stand, not for herself alone, but for the world.”

That resounding call to make a stand is just as relevant today for home educators and the Texas Home School Coalition.

For many, a new year is a time of new beginnings. For home schoolers, it is a time to begin another semester full of learning, activities, and

personal growth. It is also a time to review the previous year and to adapt plans for the future. It is a time of expectation and preparation. Staff at THSC have been busy serving home schooling families across the state, preparing leaders for vital roles in the home schooling community, planning upcoming events, and taking action for member families in need. 

Staff at THSC have been busy serving home schooling families across the state, preparing leaders for vital roles in the home schooling community, planning upcoming events, and taking action for member families in need.

Maintaining Freedom


In December a THSC member contacted the Association after she decided it was in her child’s best interest to withdraw her from public school and begin home schooling. Unfortunately, the Dallas ISD has not made it the simple process it should be. Even after this mother sent an initial letter of withdrawal followed by an assurance letter, Dallas ISD still refused to remove her child from its rolls, so THSC Association became involved. President Tim Lambert responded to this harassment by the school district by writing a letter to clarify issues related to procedures for beginning to home school in Texas.

office and was told that a form or letter from her, stating her son’s home school status, would not be sufficient documentation and that notice from an accredited public or private school was required. Tim Lambert wrote a letter on her behalf to help resolve this issue.

In the other recent case related to child support, a member contacted the Association after his son decided to complete high school through home schooling rather than by getting a GED, reasoning that the benefits of this decision to the young man include the potential for

There is no question that THSC’s work in 2013 had a critical impact on many fronts. Now they look toward a new year with renewed resolve, eager to promote home schooling and to protect the rights of home schooling parents.

In two other instances this past quarter, the Association was called in reference to the cessation of child support for home schooling students. In one case, THSC Association stepped in to help a member who encountered difficulty having her son’s child support continued after his eighteenth birthday. As required by state laws, because her child was still in school full-time, the support should have been continued. She spoke to several people at the local child support

higher lifetime income and expanded secondary education opportunities. When the family encountered complications with having child support for their son continued beyond the age of eighteen, the father wrote THSC Association for assistance. Because the son is a full-time student pursuing a high school diploma in a private school, the law requires his support to be continued. Tim Lambert responded with a letter to the Texas attorney general’s office in support of the family. 


Reclaiming Freedoms

On other fronts, THSC has been working hard to keep members informed of potential issues and the news related to candidates running for various offices. Several candidates have expressed support for home schooling issues, and the THSC Association is gearing up for endorsement vetting of candidates for the coming elections.

During the 2013 legislative session, THSC worked diligently to pass the Texas Parental Rights Restoration Act and made greater progress in that effort than ever before. The Texas Family Law Foundation attempted to pass legislation that would make every fit parent in Texas susceptible to lawsuits by any grandparent suing for possession of their children. By God's grace THSC was successful in killing that bill, thus stopping that attempt to undermine parental rights in Texas. It was evident that God's hand was on our team, as we witnessed again and again how critical timing was to our success. You can read more about parental rights battles and victories online at thsc.org/2013-wrap-up.


Also in 2013 THSC made more progress than ever before in changing the law to allow home schoolers to take part in extracurricular activities

in public schools. In addition, they worked in opposition to a bill that would have allowed doctors to put Do Not Attempt to Resuscitate orders into the files of children without their parents knowledge or against their parents' expressed wishes. This bill was thwarted, and the rights of parents in Texas preserved, because of THSC's diligent team of lobbyists in Austin.

There is no question that THSC's work in 2013 had a critical impact on many fronts. Now they look toward a new year with renewed resolve, eager to promote home schooling and to protect the rights of home schooling parents. One way they will be doing so is with their redesigned thsc.org website, which offers a wealth of information and resources available in a format that can be accessed via computer and many mobile devices. As technology changes they are able to provide more ways to connect with home schoolers, to provide useful resources, and to respond in times of critical need for Association members. 

Common Sense Ways to Make a Difference

Yes, these many years later it seems that Thomas Paine still speaks to us, urging people to take a stand, to be a beacon for others, and to spread the light of freedom. THSC has answered that call and is committed to working diligently to serve the home schooling community of Texas

and to protect the rights of Texas Home Schoolers. Please keep THSC in your prayers during the coming year. May God continue to bless the work of the THSC and preserve the home schooling freedoms in the great state of Texas—in 2014 and for generations to come. 



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BOOK REVIEW: GOD'S NAMES

by Marilyn Rockett



A child's name and the names of family and friends are among the first things we teach a child. Even my youngest grandson could clearly say his name and knew it belonged to him when he was only eighteen months old. Of course, my husband and I were thrilled when he repeated with recognition our names, "Mimi" and "Papi."

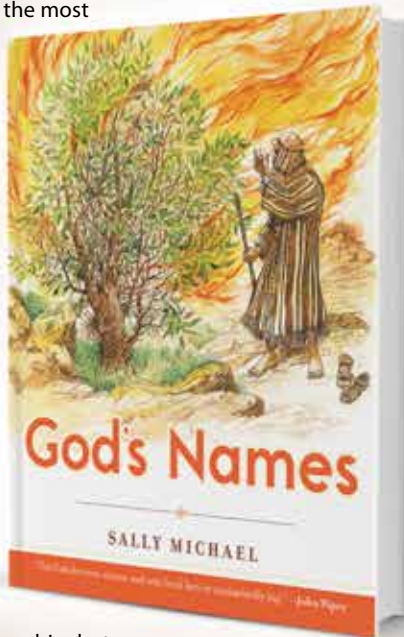
Children understand that everyone has a name and that we know who people are by their names.

Author Sally Michael, cofounder of Children Desiring God ministry and a part of the family discipleship program at Bethlehem Baptist Church (John Piper's church), has given the family one of the most valuable resources I have found. *God's Names* (P&R Publishing, 2011) is a "mini-primer on the character of God as revealed by His names," Michael states in the preface to her book. She explains that the book is to be "an interactive dialogue between adult and child" as they discover God's character together. Parents are to apply this resource to help them model a belief that we can trust God's name and that "He is worthy of our love and praise."

A short but instructive introduction to parents on how to use the book "to present solid truth to their children and to encourage real-life application of the truth" begins this resource. Michael's book is set apart from others by her desire to help parents go beyond simply teaching God's names intellectually. She offers assistance in moving toward building a relationship between parent and child, interacting to help a child discover truth instead of simply hearing it, understanding truth and integrating it into "your child's theological framework," helping the child relate to God, emphasizing the power of God's Word, presenting the gospel interspersed throughout the book, and praying for the Holy Spirit to quicken truth to children's hearts. Following the introduction is a helpful pronunciation guide, from which I learned that I probably have been mispronouncing some of God's names for years!

After this meaty beginning, there are twenty-six, four-page chapters highlighting a name of God in Scripture or, in some cases, giving a gospel message by applying the names previously discussed to God's salvation message. Michael covers familiar Old Testament names, such as Elohim, El Shaddai, and Jehovah-Jireh, as well as less familiar ones, such as Jehovah Or. She then moves to New Testament names, such as

Lamb of God, Savior, Messiah, Christ, Coming King, and others. Each chapter ends with a "Learning to Trust God" section, with scripture to read, discussion questions, and an activity.



Every Christian parent's home should contain a copy of *God's Names*, in my opinion, to guide them in introducing their early elementary-age children to our wonderful, amazing God Who, I learned, has more than 700 names, titles, and nicknames in the Bible. The \$16.95 retail price is a small investment for a valuable resource.

***"And those who know Your name
will put their trust in You;
For You, O LORD, have not forsaken
those who seek You."
(Psalm 9:10, NASB)***

As Michael says in the preface,

***"May your name and your
children's names be
remembered by the Lord
forever. Amen."***

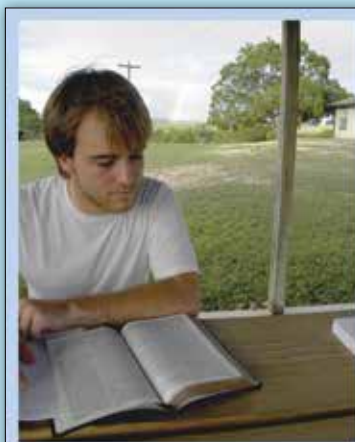


Marilyn Rockett is a veteran home school mom with four grown sons, six grandsons, one granddaughter, and three great-grandsons. She has mentored moms for more than thirty years. Her book *Homeschooling at the Speed of Life* provides organizational helps and encouragement. Visit her at www.MarilynRockett.com.

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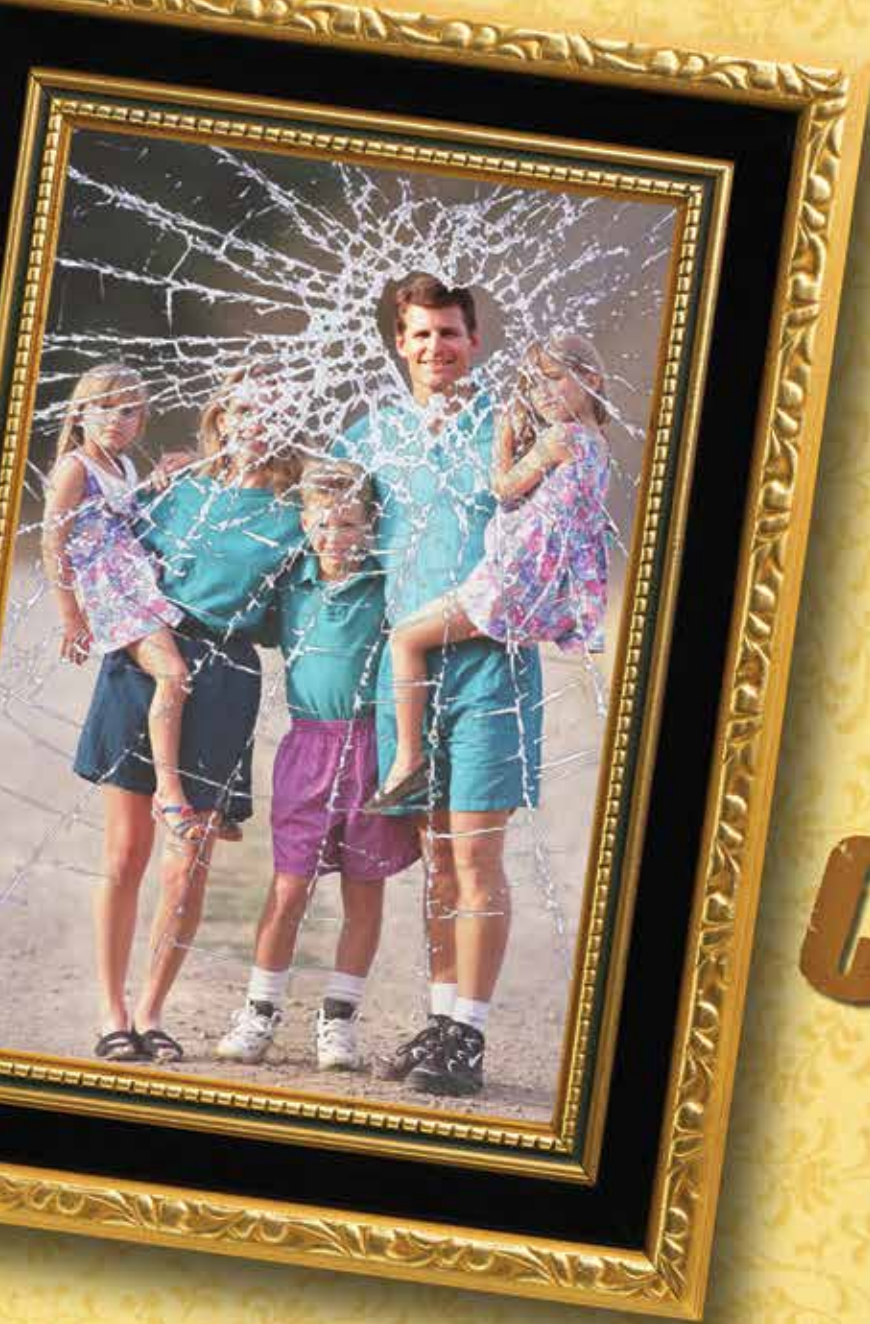
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LIFE COLLISION

by Julie Blackmon

When the smooth activities of daily life come to a screeching halt because of a collision with the traumatic, how do you persevere with life, much less home schooling? Whether it is the shock of serious health issues for you or someone you love, the death of a friend or family member, the deep betrayal and abandonment of divorce, financial devastation, or any other unexpected hardship, regardless of current feelings, there is power to continue, and there is hope for the future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

Last March our family collided with the concrete barrier of what I call, "The Trauma." It was incredibly sudden, completely unexpected, and severely life altering. This trauma caused our environment to change drastically and it included a move to a new home, in a new city, with much uncertainty and fear regarding the future.

When hardship comes, there is a period of time when it is difficult to sleep, difficult to eat, and difficult to even think clearly or make wise decisions.

Following many tears and massive amounts of prayer, a clinging, questioning, battered faith in God ensued. It was a faith that would definitely not register among the Hebrews 11 Heroes of the Faith Hall of Fame but it was a deliberate choice to hold tight to God's promises regardless of the present disappointments and heart-wrenching feelings that seemed to overwhelm from within.

*The typical feelings associated with any grief process are:
shock, anger, guilt, sadness, hopelessness.*

In the middle of all of this trauma drama that would not end as suddenly as it began, there was a commitment to continue to educate my four boys still at home. It was a daunting mountain of a task when I was at a point where it seemed my brain could not even get a message to my lips correctly. I would say things like, "Look out for that potholder" when attempting to warn my fifteen-year-old permit driver of an upcoming pothole.

Confusion seems to be a large part of the grief journey. It is difficult to concentrate on anything other than the loss.

While confusion and exhaustion are a normal part of the grief process, the children and I began to take steps to eat healthier and sleep better and we purposed to do things that placed us in better physical shape. We also made the choice to avoid relationships and conversations that were unhealthy, which included unfriending some “friends” on Facebook who brought memories or caused emotional upheaval. Although unseen to the naked eye, the Trauma had left us with gaping wounds that threatened to fester and become infected if not protected. Our Great Surgeon, Jesus, began shining His light and healing our injuries as soon as we called out to Him, but we also had to recognize the activities or personal relationships that pulled at our Band-Aids and tugged at our stitches and, in turn, we had to make wise choices to protect ourselves in those areas and allow time for our hurts to heal.

Grief is a necessary process, the length of which depends on the individual; but it is also necessary to allow the grief process to run its course now or it will resurface later.

As we have begun this process of healing, we have had to reevaluate where we are in life and what are our goals. This process has progressed into a new normal that starts new traditions and new schedules. Our

home school looks drastically different than before. With a single-parent home school come new challenges and new, creative ingenuity, but it still works. God has taken what seemed an impossibility and made it more than possible.

When pausing to reevaluate, it is beneficial to drop all previous expectations and seek God for His plan for your home school and for His creative solutions to your new needs.

One way God turned an unworkable situation into a workable situation was by sending His people—His church—to help us during this time of grief. We are not meant to “go it alone.” It seems an easy thing to join in and give to others when you know there are needs, but to receive gifts God sends through His people can be likened to a large dose of medicine: while it is curative, it may, at first, be unpleasant to the taste buds. God has used this method to bring us to a point of humility and to permeate our lives with deep gratitude, even in sorrow.



Julie Blackmon is a retired court reporter and everyday home school mom of six children that loves the organized chaos of home schooling and delights in the opportunity to write about the humbling God lessons and humorous events she encounters through her day-to-day home schooling adventures.

Where Is the Potter's Wheel?

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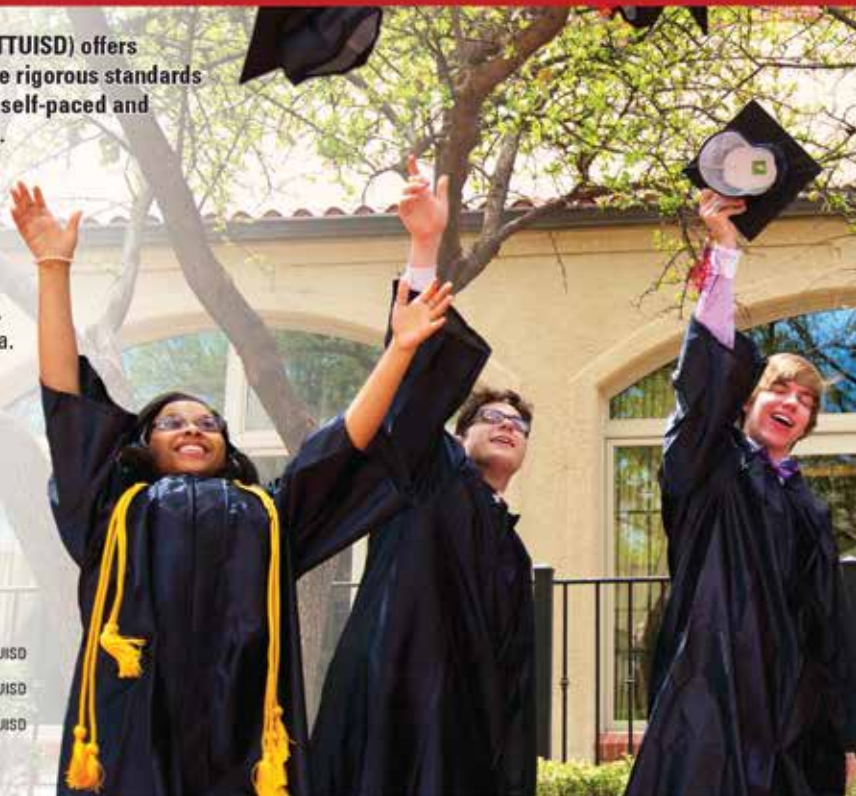
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CALENDER OF EVENTS

May 9-10, 2014 ~ Arlington

Home School Book Fair
 Hearth and Home Ministries
 homeschoolbookfair.org

May 16-17, 2014 ~ San Antonio

Home School Convention and Curriculum Fair
 Family Educators Alliance of South Texas (FEAST)
 homeschoolfeast.com

June 6-7, 2014 ~ San Angelo

West Texas Family Conference
 San Angelo Christian Home School
 Association (SACHSA)
 sachsa.org

July 24-26, 2014 ~ The Woodlands

Southwest Convention & Family Conference
 Texas Home School Coalition (THSC)
 thsc.org/convention



THSC Association Membership Benefit Providers

The following companies offer discounts and benefits to THSC Association members. Find out more at THSC.org.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Insurance

bcbstx.com
CollegePlus! Coaching
 collegeplus.org
Creation Illustrated
 creationillustrated.com
Discover Texas
 discovertexasonline.com

Driver Ed in a Box

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Education Plus
 homeschooltranscripts.com
FEAST
 homeschoolfeast.com
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Homeschool Spanish Academy

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MiQuotes.com
 miquotes.com

My Favorite Campground

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 teenpact.com
THSC Association
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UberSmart Software
 ubersmartsoftware.com

The Texas Home School Coalition (THSC) is a 501(c)(3) educational organization that is supported by tax-deductible donations. THSC is dedicated to serving the home school community; it promotes home education in Texas by educating the public, the home school community, and officials about home schooling.

THSC Association, a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization dedicated to serving and protecting the home school community of Texas, is supported by membership fees (not tax-deductible) and sales of resources. The Association now offers legal assistance in regard to home education issues as a benefit to its members, along with several other benefits and discounts.

The work of the THSC PAC (Political Action Committee) - endorsing and supporting pro-home schooling candidates - is supported by donations that are not tax-deductible. See thscpac.org for more information.

KEN PAXTON.

Proud to be the ONLY candidate for Attorney General endorsed by the Texas Home School Coalition



"Based on his long record of supporting home schooling and parental rights, we are pleased to enthusiastically endorse Senator Paxton for the office of Texas Attorney General. We will be telling the tens of thousands of home schoolers in Texas that he has been a tireless advocate for the right of parents to direct the care, control, and education of their children and we will be working hard for his election."

**Tim Lambert, President
Texas Home School Coalition**



Paxton family, left to right: Tucker, Katie, Angela, Ken, Mattie, and Abby.

"Ken and I had the privilege of home schooling all four of our children at different points in their lives, and those times were an incredible blessing to our family. As a home school Dad, you can absolutely count on Ken to defend your right to home school your children. I hope you will vote for my husband in the March 4th Republican primary."

- Angela Paxton



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