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## the **Bonillas**

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Remembering Óscar — PAGES 10-11

Raise them Right: Part 1 — PAGES 4-5

In All Things Tempted — PAGES 6-7

The Christian Youth and the Choosing of Friends — PAGES 12-13

and more



# Christianfamily

A bilingual magazine for Christian families | Vol 7, No 3, July - September 2022



# EDITORIAL

What is the family to do when a loved one gets the news that he/she has a life-threatening illness, or when a loved one has finally lost his/her battle with that illness and has left an empty space in the home? What if you are the one dealing with a life-threatening illness? In this issue, Amparo and her children share their story of faith in the middle of illness and death and give some advice to cope with pain and loss. An additional article pays tribute to the memory of Óscar, Amparo's husband.

Other articles in this issue offer helpful advice to develop a godly home, train children properly, overcome temptation, choose positive friendships, treasure and follow the Bible, teach sensitive issues to teens, and avoid family conflict. We hope that this issue will be a great blessing to you.

Paul Holland & Moisés Pinedo

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Helping families become stronger in the Lord

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what our

# Homes

should be

Part 2



## *The home should be dedicated to God.*

**I**t should be just as sacred as the house of worship; it should be a place where God is praised. An “altar to God” should be constantly erected, and we should be on intimate terms with the Lord. Like the ancient leader, we should exclaim, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). The apostle Paul exhorts that men pray everywhere (1 Timothy 2:8). We are to pray without ceasing in the home (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5: 17). The curse of God rests upon the home that has refused to acknowledge Him: “Pour out Your fury on the Gentiles, who do not know You, and on the families who do not call on Your name” (Jeremiah 10:25).

The family is older than the church. The first religion was a family religion. The father was the “priest” or “minister”. Noah built an altar when he came out of the ark, and he worshiped God (Genesis 8). Cornelius, the Gentile centurion, prayed to God with his house (Acts 10). When a man and woman unite their hearts and start in life together, they should take Christ as their silent partner. They should have Him always as the honored guest in the home. A home with Jesus in it is a wealthy home; a home with no Jesus is a home of poverty, even though it be made out of the finest

material and furnished with the most beautiful and costly furniture.

A farmer’s child went to visit the home of a rich man’s child. The little boy looked at the magnificent paintings on the walls and the many beautiful toys, and said to his little playmate, “Me don’t have any nice paintings and nice toys in my home, but me has Jesus in my home. Does you have Jesus in your home?” When the boy left, the other child went to his parents and asked, “Do we have Jesus in our home?”

That is a question that all of us should ask. “Do you have Jesus in your home?” I would rather live in a cabin by the side of the road, with bare floors and bare walls, and have to sleep in a bed of straw, with the consciousness of Jesus in my home, than to live in a mansion with all of the modern comforts, and no Jesus in my home. ■

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Adapted from William H. Book, *Sermons for the People* (Cincinnati, OH: The Standard Publishing Company, 1918), 139-141.

# Raise them Right: Part 1

## Biblical Wisdom for Modern Parenting from Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Paul Holland

**In** this passage, God told Israel: “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

God’s primary desire in raising children is for parents to teach them how to develop character. We parents need to live our lives with character, following God’s instructions as closely as possible. We all know that children will pick up more from what we **do** in front of them than from what we **say** to them.

What Deuteronomy 6 is telling us is that we need to take every opportunity we can to talk to our children about the differences between right and wrong and guide them toward doing what is right according to the commandments, directions, and instructions God has given us. We can take those opportunities all the time.

When our girls were little, we would watch Dr. Quinn: Medicine Woman starring Jane Seymour. As with most shows, this one teaches situational ethics. But frequently, I would pause the show and talk to the girls about a better way the TV character could have and should have handled the situation, rather than doing something that God says is wrong. We did something similar in more recent years with our youngest, Ana, when she was a teenager.

Parents need to train their children to understand that they are in control of their thinking and need to develop proper habits of thinking. Jesus teaches us in passages such as Matthew 5:27-28 that we are in control of, and accountable for, our thinking. In 2 Corinthians 10:5, the apostle Paul writes that we need to bring our thinking into obedience to Jesus Christ. To do that, we have to talk about God’s Word **regularly** with our children.

This also relates to the method of discipline we use. Certainly God allows, and prescribes, corporal punishment (spanking) in these passages: Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15. Here are some caveats: spanking should be used for disobedience (not simply making mistakes), for the early years, only when mom or dad is in complete control of their own temper, and should never leave lasting scars.

Just like we used to do in school, if the child is old enough to write, give him paper and pencil and tell him that he can get up from the table when he has written something that relates to his punishment. I had to write this poem **frequently** when I was in junior high school: “A wise old owl sat in an oak. The more he heard, the less he spoke. The less he spoke, the more he heard. Why can’t I be like that wise old bird?” The purpose, of course, was to teach me to **listen** more than talk. Maybe it helped some! Schools used to do things like that as a matter of punishment, to teach, and to discipline children on how to **think** properly so they will **behave** properly. We can use the same approach at home.

Parents lose some of their moral authority when they get into arguments over minor things. There simply should be no argument. The parent is the authority; the child is to be submissive. Find something that causes discomfort for your child and use it with him or her to help train them to control their thinking and therefore, their behavior. With our oldest daughter, we could threaten to take away her books (she loved to read more than anything!). You would not do that with most children, but it worked with her!

In Proverbs 25:28, the wise man advised: “Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.” We have to train our children to control their emotions as well. The lower our expectations concerning children, the more we tolerate behavior that should not be tolerated, and the more undisciplined our children become.

When U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower was young, his mother refused to allow him to go trick-or-treating. He was so mad that he went outside and punched an apple tree with his bare fists. He came in, went to his room, crying—both from physical pain and from frustration. His mom sat by his side and had a talk with him about the importance of controlling his spirit. That is what Christian parents need to do to instill the Word of God into their children's hearts.

For many years, parents are the #1 influence in their children's lives, and they can continue to be—even through the teenage years. To keep that influence through the teenage years, you have to:

- love each child unconditionally and respect each child's individuality. Don't compare one child against another, whether favorably or unfavorably. Each is an individual.
- listen to them and communicate openly with them—even when they need to talk at the most inconvenient times.
- model Christianity honestly in front of them at all times. Give Christ-like advice. When you "lose it," acknowledge it and apologize.

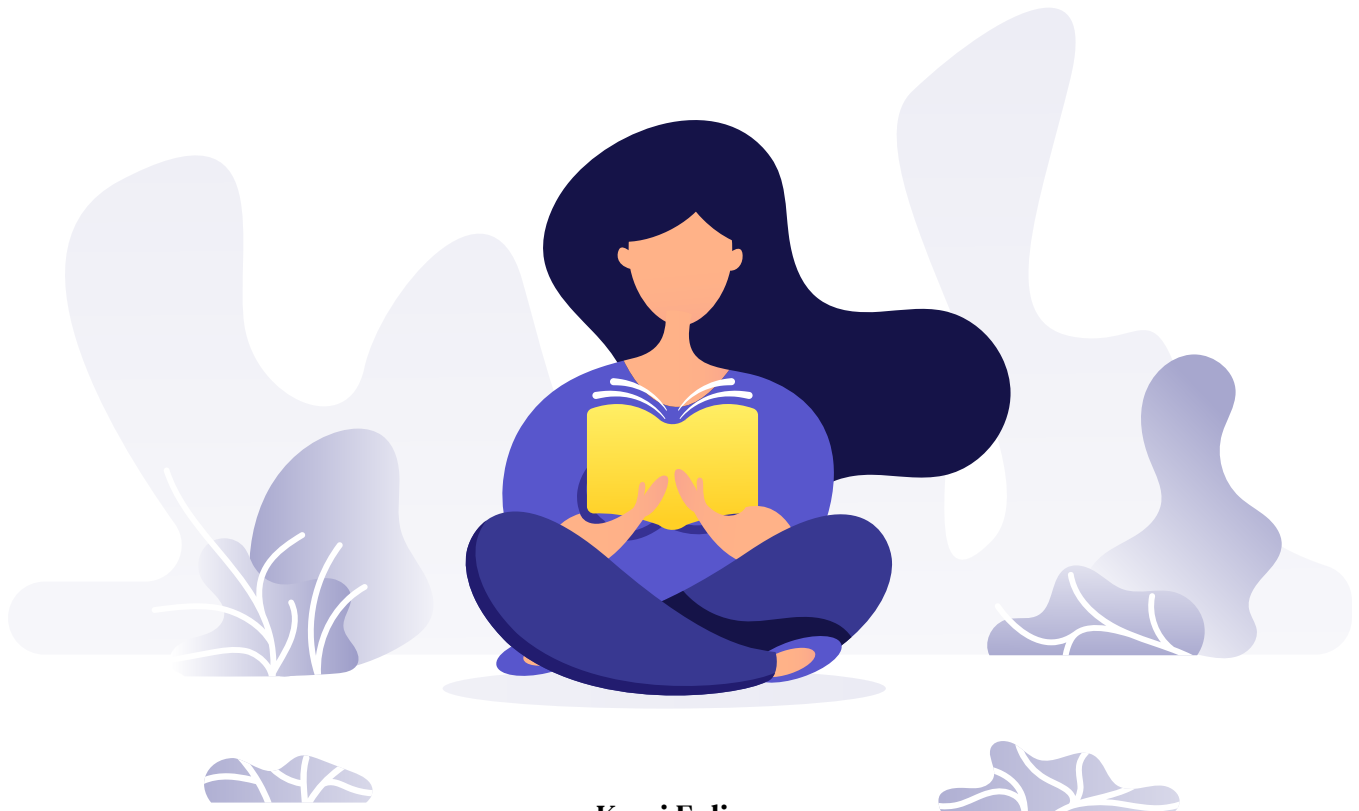
- give them more freedoms (as they show themselves responsible).

At the very top of the list of character traits, we must emulate and teach humility to our children. They can be strong and confident in who they are, without being arrogant. Humility governs self-confidence. Perhaps one reason Jesus was able to be humble (Philippians 2:5ff) was because He was confident in Who He was and where He was going. Without humility, self-confidence can be dangerous.

If you have a child with character issues, make a list of those problems. Then try to categorize the problems according to the virtues that seem to be weak or lacking. At that point, with just a handful of "areas of improvement," you can start focusing on developing the fruit of the Spirit and correcting those vices as you see the need.

We can teach our children Christian virtues at home much easier than the world will teach it to them. ■





Kerri Epling

## In All Things Tempted

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15).”

Perhaps you are going through a very difficult situation at home. It could be that you are facing betrayal by a dear friend. Maybe you are battling a difficult illness or chronic health problems. You may be suffering persecution for your faith, fatigue from your service, or constant temptation by a friend, family member, or acquaintance. At times in this life, we can become beaten down by stress, temptation, persecution, and even fatigue. It can be tempting to cry out in frustration that “no one understands what I am going through!” It can be difficult to not just throw our hands up in defeat and surrender to the sin that “so easily ensnares us” (Hebrews 12:1). Yet, we can take comfort in knowing that our High Priest, Jesus, absolutely understands **all** that we face. In fact, He emptied Himself to come to this earth (Philippians 2:5-8) so that He could be like us, and we, in turn, could be like Him. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that He was tempted in **all** points as we are, yet He did not sin. He is now with the Father, interceding for us as our Advocate (1 John 2:1).

Our text will primarily be taken from Matthew 4:1-14. Take the time to read this passage thoughtfully before answering the questions below. (Remember to evaluate the context of our reading by figuring out who the main characters are, what setting they find themselves in, how God is evident in the account, how it relates to our lives today, and what lessons we can learn from the passage. Feel free to refer to previous issues for our standard questions for any Bible text we consider.)

### Questions about the temptation of Jesus

- Who led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted?
- In what state did Jesus find Himself when the tempter came to Him?
- First John 2:16 mentions three forms of temptation/sin. What are they?

- Which form of temptation did the devil try first with Jesus (vs. 3)? Why would this have been a difficult challenge for Jesus at this time?
- How did Jesus respond to the temptation each time? Can we train ourselves to respond this way as well? How? (Consider Psalm 119:11 and 2 Timothy 2:15 as you answer.)
- What does verse 4 tell us about the value of God's Word? Find and list other passages that emphasize the importance of Scripture. (Read Psalm 119 to get you started).
- Which form of temptation did the devil try in his second attempt? Do you think he was taunting Jesus here with the word "If"? Why or why not? Can you think of others who did taunt Jesus by saying, "If you are the Son of God...?"
- Again, how did Jesus respond?
- What did Satan offer Jesus in the third temptation? What kinds of temptations for us today could fall into this category?
- What is the significance of verse 10 for us today? Is it easy for us to forget this and allow other things to get in the way of our service to God?
- Verse 11 is powerful! What was the result of Jesus resisting the devil? Is it possible for us today to resist the devil? Read and meditate on James 4:7. The word "resist" here holds with it the idea of standing your ground against an enemy. Outline some practical ways to stand your ground against our enemy.
- First Peter 5:8-9 shows the urgency of being prepared to face the adversary. Ephesians 6:10-18 outlines a "battle plan" and spiritual armor. Consider some ways to prepare yourself for the daily battle against sin. Pray daily for God to help you wear His armor and resist the devil.

### Questions for children

- Where was Jesus when He was tempted?
- What does the Bible say about how Jesus felt in verse 2? How do you feel when you are hungry? Does it make you feel strong or weak?
- What did the devil want Jesus to do in verses 3, 6, and 9?
- How did Jesus respond? What did He mean when He said, "It is written"?
- What happened in verse 11, when Jesus stood up to the devil? ■

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at [kerripling@gmail.com](mailto:kerripling@gmail.com) with email subject of "Christian Family Study."

### Suggestions for interaction with children

Show them how important it is to know Scripture and start working on some memory verses with them each week. (Feel free to email me if you want ideas for how to implement this.) Study about the "Armor of God" and help them role play responses to temptation. Make the armor of God out of poster board and let them wear it. Throw "darts" (wadded up paper balls) at them while giving scenarios that might tempt them and have them block/defend against them by saying "The Bible says \_\_\_\_\_". Example: Say, "Let's skip Bible class to go to a ball game." Your child could respond with, "The Bible says not to forsake the assembly," or "The Bible says to put God first." Have your kids draw each of the temptations of Christ in order and write Jesus' response.

With teens, role play what they might say when faced with temptations from friends, teachers, or acquaintances at school, work, and recreation activities. Remind them what James 1 teaches about the nature and cause of temptation. Be open with your kids about things that tempt you to get angry, to respond rudely, etc. and explain how knowing Scripture helps you to make better choices. Remind them that being tempted is not a sin; giving into it is the sin.

# the **Bonillas**

...are a family of three: Amparo and her two children, Adriana and Alexander. Amparo was married to Óscar, a faithful preacher in the San Borja congregation in Lima, Peru. Óscar and his family came to the Lord in 2004, and since that time they began working together and helping the church. Óscar became the preacher for the San Borja congregation in 2016 and served the congregation faithfully until he passed away on December 4, 2021. His family continues to work for the Lord and His church. Here, Amparo and her children share their family journey of faith in the middle of illness and death.



Photos by Yuriko Studio

**What single word would define your family, and why?**

**“Perseverance,”** because during our Christian life, and as a family, we have had many difficult problems that could have discouraged us, but thanks to God, each day we try to become stronger and continue in His ways.

**Would you briefly describe each member of your family?**

**Amparo** is a strong and loving woman. Although she has faced many difficulties in life, she has always been a great example to her children and family in the faith. Above all, she has been a faithful wife and a mother dedicated to God.

**Adriana** has always had the desire to learn and work for the Lord. She was baptized at 13, and she continues to be faithful to God today. She had the opportunity to work as a missionary in Brazil; today she continues to work for the Lord, helping with the ladies and children classes.

**Alexander** was baptized at 10, and since that time he has been involved in the work with the church. He currently works with the teens and the youth group.

**Some years ago, you (Amparo) were diagnosed with cancer. What was your first reaction?**

I was devastated and afraid, but at the same time, I was thankful to God that it was me, not my husband or my children.

**How did your family help you cope with this situation?**

I remember that my husband was with me when I was given the diagnosis; his words were, “Don’t worry; everything is in God’s hands.” When we met our children, they gave me a hug and said that, in a sense, “all of us shared this cancer, and that God would take care of us even in the middle of this situation.” They were the spiritual strength I needed.

**A couple of years ago, your husband was diagnosed with lung cancer. How did you deal, as a family, with this new situation?**

This new situation was very difficult to accept, and at the beginning we could not believe it, but my hus-



band always had a good attitude about his illness, and he began to focus even more on God's Word and his family. My children and I were able to attend to his needs and give him the quality of life he needed during his time of illness. We had the hope that he would overcome this illness, but God allowed a different outcome for us.

***In which ways did the brotherhood help you cope with this situation?***

Our Christian family, from our home congregation as well as from other places, always prayed for my husband and my family; they also looked after our physical and spiritual health. We are very thankful to God for the help of our Christian family.

***Last year your husband finally lost his battle with cancer. What is the family legacy/example he has left for you?***

He left a great mark on us; he taught us that, despite the difficulties, we are to continue to be faithful to God. In the middle of his illness, we were able to see the way he strived to teach God's Word, as well as the strength that he showed to cope with his pain. His legacy is a family that is faithful to God and that is full of love for the brotherhood.

***How have sickness and death influenced the way you view life?***

We have learned by experience that it does not matter how much we strive to lengthen our lives; in the end, death comes to all of us. Therefore, we are to focus on our spiritual lives and on reaching the goal of eternal life.

***What advice would you give to those families that are facing the illness or death of a loved one?***

- Take time to process your pain.
- If you need to cry, do so; Jesus also wept (John 11:35).
- Do not allow depression to drive you away from the Lord.
- If you feel that you cannot overcome depression or sorrow, reach out to your Christian family. If you need it, find professional help.
- Pray at all times (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- Involve yourself in the work of the Lord.
- Always remember that nothing is beyond the power of God. ■





## Remembering ÓSCAR

Moisés Pinedo

I traveled to Lima, Peru from November 24 to December 1, 2021. Óscar, who was supported by my home congregation in East Tennessee, had been struggling with lung cancer for about a year, and his health was rapidly declining. (My initial plans were to travel a week earlier, but I received news from my sister, who lives close to Nashville, that she was diagnosed with acute leukemia, and I had to postpone my flight to visit with her.)

I had always communicated with Óscar on the phone to talk about the work in Lima, but a few weeks before my trip, he was not able to talk much to me; his voice was getting weaker, and I knew then that his health was worsening. Óscar had expressed the desire to see me, and I also knew that his family and the church needed some encouragement during that time. The elders at my home congregation knew about the situation and agreed that I needed to travel, and they offered much-needed assistance, moral support, and prayers. Since this was a sudden trip, with pandemic-strict restrictions still in force in Peru, I traveled alone.

As I got ready to leave for Peru, I knew that this was going to be a completely different trip than I ever

had before, yet I did not know **how** different it would be. Prior to this trip, my visits to Peru included holding a Gospel meeting, visiting the brethren with the preacher (especially the elderly and sick), and doing some evangelistic work with him; so, even though I knew Óscar was sick, I still thought that I would get to do some of these things with him, maybe also take him and his family to a nice restaurant. (Up until October, Óscar had been sending his monthly reports, and some pictures showed that he was still doing some evangelistic and visitation work.)

My first shocking realization, upon arriving in Peru, was concerning Óscar's condition. My preparations for the trip included a mental image of a strong-enough Óscar who would aid in meeting the plans for this trip; but when I arrived at his home, I saw him lying in bed, without much strength, and as thin as he could be. His appearance struck me, and, from that time on, I knew my plans were going to change. He saw me and tried to lift himself up; I bent down and hugged him instead. We cried together, and I overheard Amparo, his wife, telling their son, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." Now I better understand why Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb. This may have a simple answer: "Maybe He just

could not help it.” He was a human being with human feelings, and Lazarus and his sisters were His friends. Óscar was a friend to me; his family are also friends to me. It was “easy” (I could not help it) to cry with him and with them. Without knowing it, we were experiencing the Scriptures as they were being practically displayed at that very moment.

I tried to put myself in Óscar’s shoes as I wondered, “What would I want to hear if I were in Óscar’s situation? I began to talk to him about the hope of heaven, in my mind, trying to confirm his faith so he would not lose heart. He listened to me for a while as I gave my “dissertation” on heaven, and then he began to talk about heaven himself. Let me tell you this: You have never heard about heaven until you hear it from someone who is ready to go there. Then I realized, “He does not need me to confirm his hope of heaven; his faith is strong as a rock!” Yet, he was listening, talking, and enjoying the conversation about heaven. Yes, he wanted to hear about heaven, but not because he was doubting heaven; he just wanted to hear and talk about heaven with people who believed it as much as he did. He just wanted partners in the faith of Christ and partners on the way to heaven.

Óscar was an example of love, kindness, and thankfulness, even in the middle of his suffering; I do not know of anyone who knew Óscar well and did not love him. One of the memories that will stay with me is when we had a family devotional at night in Óscar’s bedroom as he was not able to walk that much. I was asked to bring a lesson; I do not remember what I talked about, but I do remember Óscar’s words after the lesson: “Brother, could we sing ‘Thank You, Lord?’ I will lead it.” Then he started. I do not know who struggled more to sing that song—if it was him or the rest of us. Now I better understand why Amparo came to me one day and told me, “Little brother (that is what she calls me), I can’t lose him! I don’t know how to live without Óscar.”

I never felt more incompetent than that week. As I saw the pain and the tears, I wished I had the gentle, yet powerful touch of Jesus to heal the sick (Matthew 8:15), to change the tears into joy (Luke 7:11-16), and to say with assurance, “I will come and heal him” (Matthew 8:7). Yet, one day my perspective changed. Amparo came to me and thanked me deeply for

coming to see Óscar and them. I told Amparo that I wished I could do more for them than just coming. Then she said, “You know, last week, when you received the news of your sister having leukemia and had to cancel your trip here? I told myself, ‘That is it; I don’t think he is coming.’ I didn’t want Óscar to have his hopes up, and I told him, ‘Óscar, you know that his sister got leukemia; he may not be able to come at all.’ Then he looked at me and said, ‘I know he will come,’ and I am glad you did.” At that moment I realized that Óscar never expected me to take away his pain, heal him, make him forget, or change his circumstances—whether for him or his family; he just wanted me to come!

This was one of the hardest trips I have ever made, but I am glad I made it. Spending a week with Óscar and his family taught me one of the greatest lessons about identifying with people’s suffering. It was their suffering, not mine; yet, in a real sense, it became mine and stays mine. The day that I had to come back to the U.S., Óscar was lying in his bed. I hugged him and told him I was leaving. He was confused about what was going on; Amparo said to him, “Óscar, it is Moisés; he is going back home.” He looked at me and smiled one last time... and a few days later, Óscar also “went back home.”

**I miss you, brother! ■**





# the Christian Youth and the CHOOSING OF FRIENDS

Daniel Jaramillo

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).”

One of the most important and influential experiences in the life of a young person is friendship. Young people look for associations to find identity, acceptance, and happiness. However, if a young person is not careful, he may associate with people who may influence his life in a negative and permanent way. That is why it is so important to look at the Scriptures to learn to choose the right friendships and avoid those that are harmful.

## Unnecessary Friendships

We can say that there are friendships that are “unnecessary”; these are friendships that are harmful to the life of a young person. We have the example of King Rehoboam and the friends of his youth. Rehoboam preferred to listen to his young friends instead of listening to the elders of the people of God (1 Kings 12:8-11). As a consequence, his kingdom was divided. This friendship was harmful to Rehoboam. On the other hand, true friends will not only seek their own benefit, but they will seek the benefit of others, especially of the people of God.

Another example is Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, a righteous man who sought God and walked in the ways of King David (2 Chronicles 17:3-6). But he also came to associate with someone evil: Ahab, the king of Israel (1 Kings 22:2-4); in fact, Jehoshaphat allied himself with Ahab (2 Chronicles 18:1; cf. 1 Kings 3:1). Ahab persuaded Jehoshaphat to go to war against the Syrians, and though Jehoshaphat tried to influence Ahab to seek the counsel of the Lord (1 Kings 22:5), he was not successful. Thanks to God’s mercy, Jehoshaphat did not die at the hands of the Syrians who were seeking the life of Ahab (1 Kings 22:31-33; cf. 2 Chronicles 18:31). After Ahab died, Jehoshaphat started a friendship with Ahaziah, the wicked son of Ahab. The Lord sternly rebuked him and punished him (2 Chronicles 20:35-37), pointing out the reason: “Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah.” His ships could not go to Tarshish due to this wrongful association between Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah. How many plans, projects, and ideas do not come to light and do not succeed due to wrong friendships?

Certainly, “[e]vil company corrupts good habits” (1 Corinthians 15:33; cf. Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 13:20). The

New Testament warns that friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4). What can someone do if he has begun a negative association with someone else? The Lord advises, “Come out from among them and be separate... Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17). There must be a strong determination to leave behind harmful friendships, especially in view that they may be a stumbling block to preserve our friendship with God.

### Necessary Friendships

Proverbs 18:24 presents the foundation and responsibility of friendship when it says that the man who has friends “must himself be friendly” and that a friend “sticks closer than a brother.”

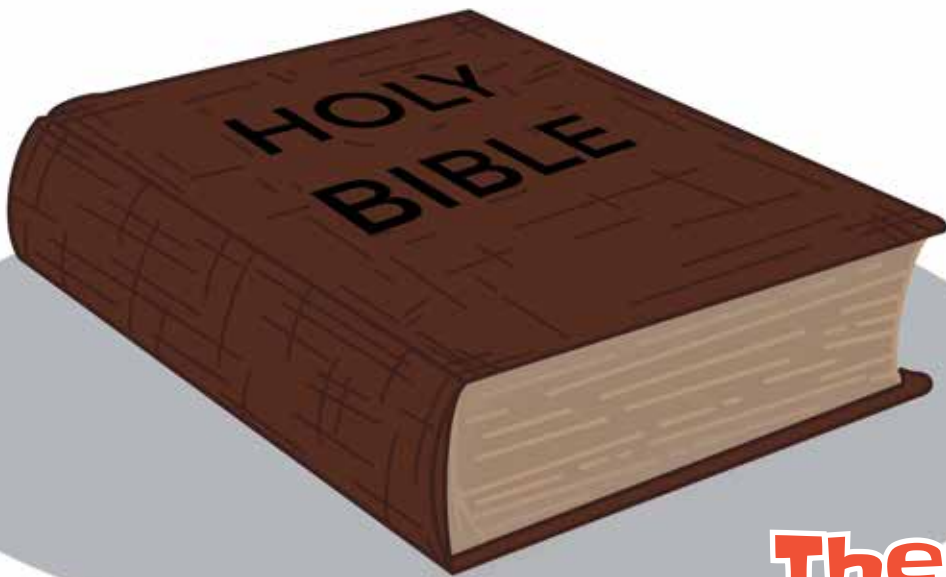
First, the young person who has or looks for friends must be willing to offer his own friendship to others (cf. John 15:13; 1 John 4:19). This was the case with David and Jonathan, who offered their friendship to one another (1 Samuel 18:1-4). Jonathan came to love David as himself. Instead of being selfish and protective of his position as the son of the king, Jonathan was generous to David. He also tried to preserve David’s life, protecting him even from his own father (1 Samuel 19:1-7; 20:17, 42; 23:16-18). David also loved Jonathan, and when Jonathan died, David lamented his death (2 Samuel 1:26) and fulfilled his part of their friendship pact by having mercy on Jonathan’s de-

scendants (2 Samuel 9:1-7). From David and Jonathan, we can learn that friendship is a covenant where both parties seek to benefit one another, even above their own lives.

Second, the wise declared that there is a friend who “sticks closer than a brother.” The union among friends is compared to that of brothers. How should the union among brothers be? It should be based on God’s Word (John 17:14, 20-23). It should be connected by the bond of love, “giving preference to one another” (Romans 12:10). It should be dedicated to patience, mercy, and forgiveness (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13). Also, it should be a relationship that is concerned with the exhortation and correction of faults to promote the improvement and perfection of friendship (cf. Hebrews 12:11). A true friend will also say what is true.

There is a great difference between a physical brother and a friend: We do not choose our relatives, but in the case of friends, we have the privilege of choosing them to become part of our lives. Let us use this privilege wisely, so we may choose correctly our companions for this life; but most importantly, let us choose friendships that will help us reach the goal of our calling: eternal life. “And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life” (Philippians 4:3). ■





Ella Pinedo

## The B-I-B-L-E

### “The B-I-B-L-E. Yes, that’s the book for me!”

**T**he first words of this song hold strong meaning. The Bible is the book for me, and it is the only book that will lead me to heaven. I love the Bible and want to study it daily! The Bible is our guide to heaven, and it holds all the answers to life’s questions.

The Bible is the most important book that has ever been written because it is inspired by God. What does “inspired” mean? “Inspired” means that it is God-breathed. Second Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” The Bible is the way God communicates and talks to His people. We are His people, and He has given us full instructions in His Word.

### “I stand alone on the word of God.”

This line of the song was a bit confusing to me at first. The meaning of this line is that we stand on the word of God only. The Bible is the only book that we need to stand alone on; it is the only true Word of God. We can feel confident in trusting the Bible!

The Bible is like a map, or a GPS which is commonly used today. It is our guide to heaven, and it shows us the way. The Bible contains rules and commandments that tell us what not to do and what to

do. Think about when your parents use a GPS to guide them where they are going. Without that digital map, would they be able to find their way to a beach, the mountains, or anywhere else? We would not know what way to go if it were not for the Bible. Just like a GPS, we need the Bible to guide us in the right way.

This book has two parts, as most of you may already know. The first part, the Old Testament, tells how man was created and gives instruction for God’s people at that time. The New Testament, the second part, contains the law that we are under today. We must follow the New Testament instructions as God has commanded us.

How do you incorporate the Bible into your everyday life? Do you study your Bible every day? Reading the Bible every day is very important, and it is a good idea to have a plan of how you will accomplish this task every day. We cannot just study our Bibles on Sundays and Wednesdays only, although those are great opportunities to learn more. We should have a time set aside each and every day for Bible reading: a time just for us and God.

Now, the Bible is the method that God communicates with us today. In the Old Testament God talked (directly at times) to His people. But now He has a different way of communicating with us; He guides us by His written Word (Hebrews 1:1-2). We communicate with Him through prayer. We pray to Him and praise Him, tell Him our problems, ask Him to help those who are sick, tell Him our wants and needs, etc.

We have a great way of communicating with the Lord our God, and we know we can talk to Him anytime. He is always there to listen, and He cares for us very much. This is a great comfort.

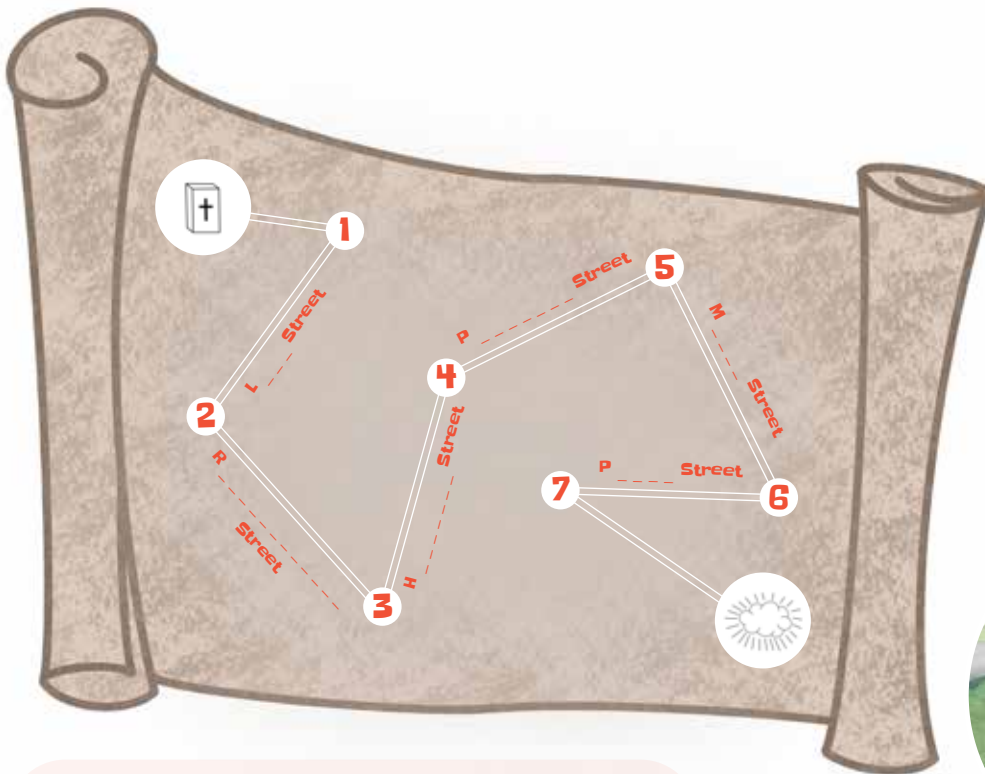
The Word of God contains absolutely no mistakes (though some people may tell you so). You will not be able to find a contradiction because the Bible doesn't contain any! You could look for mistakes forever, and you would never find one! It is a perfect book and it is possible to understand it. It is full of many interesting stories too.

## CONCLUSION

The Bible definitely is the book that leads us to heaven. It is our way to connect with God, and we can dig deeper into His Word every day. The Bible is our map, and it shows us the way to go, the way that will lead to heaven. We talk to God through prayer, and He answers our prayers. The Bible holds the answers to all our important questions. We know that we can always rely on God's Word and that it has no mistakes. The B-I-B-L-E is the most important book in the world! ■

## The M-A-P

The Bible is the map to heaven. Follow the streets from number to number. Find the Bible verse (on the right) that corresponds to each street between two numbers, and then complete the street name according to the spiritual virtue found in the verse (the first letter is provided). Continue to travel to find your way to heaven! (Use the New King James Version.)



- 1-2** John 13:34
- 2-3** Matthew 5:6
- 3-4** 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 4-5** Luke 21:19
- 5-6** Proverbs 14:21
- 6-7** 1 Peter 3:11b



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Illustrations on this spread by Kelsey Pinedo (age 13)

**Q:** *Is it biblical for grandparents to take on the responsibility of raising their grandchildren when the parents don't fulfill that responsibility?* —SAN MIGUEL PETAPA, GUATEMALA

Children must be provided with security—physically, academically, spiritually, and emotionally. My wife (Rachel) was spiritually educated by her grandmother much more than her mother. Grandparents should not underestimate the role they can have in their grandchildren's lives. If the parents are not providing for the children, or are not providing for one of the areas mentioned above (such as the spiritual life), then grandparents should do what they can to provide. However, they should also recognize that the parents have the right and authority to raise their children as they see appropriate. So, grandparents have to be careful not to overstep their boundaries; that could cause a worse relationship. —PH

**Q:** *How can I talk about sex with my teen child from a biblical perspective?*  
—VILLAHERMOSA, MEXICO

Begin by pointing out that God created Adam and Eve (all humanity) with a sexual drive. That means that this “urge” is natural and designed by God. Adam and Eve were naked in each other's presence, but they were not ashamed (Genesis 2:25). Also, point out from Song of Solomon that the bride and groom compliment each other's physical characteristics (4:1-6, especially verse 5; 5:10-16). Sexual desire should be fulfilled within the marriage relationship (Proverbs 5:18-21). The more you give yourself to your spouse (in every way), the more fulfilling your relationship (including its sexual aspect) will become. Don't forget to point out verses that teach against adultery and fornication. —PH

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**Q:** *How can I obey God and do His will without getting into conflict with my unbelieving parents?* —TOLUCA, MEXICO

First, your behavior is very important. Peter wrote that a husband could be won for Christ by the good conduct of his wife (1 Peter 3:1). This principle also applies to the other relationships in the home. God's commandments are only good, and they shape the life of a person for the best (cf. Psalm 19:7-9). Most likely, if you follow them closely, your parents will see your light (Matthew 5:16) and there would be less conflict. Second, talk to your parents and explain how important Christianity is for you, and that you would like for them to respect your faith and allow you to exercise it. Explain that you do not want to disobey them, but neither do you want to do anything that goes against your conscience in relation to your faith (Acts 24:16). Keep calm and be respectful even if your parents get irritated. Third, go the second mile (cf. Matthew 5:38-42). What can you do to reduce or avoid conflict? Clean your room and do your chores early, before you go to worship on Sunday morning. Let your parents know that you are happy to do some other chores to be allowed more freedom to practice your faith. Lastly, expect some conflict. Jesus said that His ways would cause conflict even in the home (Matthew 10:34-37). Sometimes you will have to make the decision to obey God rather than people (Acts 4:19; 5:29). However, if your parents are sensible, then chances are that, if you follow the previous advice, there would be no major conflict with them. —MP ■

