

# Christianfamily

*A bilingual magazine for Christian families*

Volume 8, number 1  
January - March 2023

## *The Gaines Family*

on Raising Children,  
International Adoption, and  
Hospitality – PAGES 8-11

What Our Homes Should Be: Part 4 – PAGE 3

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus – PAGES 6-7

7 Tips to Listening Ethically – PAGES 12-13

**and more...**







## From the editors

**We** couldn't be more excited about this new year and this new issue of the *Christian Family* magazine. Our magazine has been given a fresh look, and with it, we also have a renewed and stronger commitment to continue to help our families around the world to grow in the Lord.

In this issue, be inspired by the Gaines family and their desire to work for the Lord, raise faithful children, and build new relationships by opening the doors of their home and hearts. Be additionally encouraged and strengthened with several other articles that will help you in your personal spiritual growth and family relationships.

We are sure you will enjoy this issue. Read it, study it, and share it. Send us your questions and comments. We would like to hear from you.

Paul Holland & Moisés Pinedo

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# Christianfamily

Helping families become stronger in the Lord

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**It should be a place of spiritual guidance.**

**We** are living in an age when discipline is discouraged. But if a child is not taught to respect law and to render obedience in the home, he will become, in all probability, an anarchist. The wise king wrote:



*He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly (Proverbs 13:24).*

*Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction (Proverbs 19:18).*

*The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother... Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul (Proverbs 29:15-17).*

This doctrine is considered out of date by some modern psychologists. Instead of raising their child in the way “he should go” (Proverbs 22:6), some Christians are raising him in the way “he wants to go.” The child is never taught to mind, and he will not respect the law of the home, the law of man, and the law of God. The parents let go of the reins and the child is permitted to have his way, and soon he goes wild and finds disgrace.

Children should be taught to honor their parents as the Lord God has commanded them, that it may be well with them and they may live long on the earth (Ephesians 6:1-3). Let them take the advice of one who speaks with authority: “My son, keep your father’s command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; when you sleep, they will keep you; and when you awake, they will speak with you” (Proverbs 6:20-22).

Children are to be taught to render obedience to God, for one day they will leave the home and be on their own, and when their days are gone, they must return to the heavenly home. One day the home on earth must be forsaken, but we rejoice in the promise of our Lord Who is preparing a home for us: an eternal home where our loving Master will dwell with us forever. ■

# What our Homes should be Part 4



Adapted from William H. Book, *Sermons for the People* (Cincinnati, OH: The Standard Publishing Company, 1918), 143-146.

# RAISE THEM

Paul Holland

## RIGHT biblical wisdom for modern parenting from Genesis 3

When children come, we begin parenting largely in one of two ways:

1. We might fall back to our instincts that have been nurtured in the home we grew up in. In other words, we begin parenting, from the very first day, the way we were parented; we become the parents we ourselves had. That might be intentional or unintentional. If our parenting is unintentional, it most likely will reflect the way we were parented.
2. Or, from the first day we became parents, we begin parenting differently from the way we were parented. Again, that might be intentional or unintentional. If our parenting is unintentional, it may reflect what we have seen other parents do—either in our own personal experiences or from TV shows or movies we have watched that have parenting in them. Or, we could parent intentionally different from the way we were raised by reading different books on parenting and/or thinking more seriously about what the Bible teaches concerning parenting.

Personally, my parenting style has been influenced by my own parents—some unintentional and intentional carry-overs from my childhood. My parenting has also been influenced by the time I spent with some friends of mine: Kevin and Lyn Williams. My parenting has obviously been influenced by my wife and the influences on her which parallel the influences I had on me. Finally, I have been influenced by intentionally reading books on parenting (especially parenting from a biblical perspective), which has also modified

my views of parenting and how I do things differently than the way my parents did things.

Postmodern parenting suggests that parents are not the authority; children make the decisions in the family. That is simply not biblical, and our society is seeing the repercussions of that type of parenting. Just like in Eden, the devil is still undermining God's authority by putting a "not" in what God said (cf. Genesis 3:4).

God created Adam and Eve for a purpose. He created them to procreate and to make a home: an environment in which they and their children could develop a relationship. He created humans with the ability to know Him and to have a relationship with Him.


One thing to keep in mind from Genesis 3 is that God created mankind with free will. Both we and our children enjoy this gift. The choices we make have their own consequences. While we are free to make our choices, we are not free to choose the consequences. Of course, the ultimate consequence of obeying God is good.

Children are ignorant of many things. They do not know that if you tear a piece of paper, you cannot put it back together again. They have to be taught everything. They have to be taught that certain behaviors can cause problems. This means that parents must have some type of agreement with one another: some system in place to reward proper choices and to punish wrong choices. Parents must teach their children that there are consequences to their choices.

As children get older, they will learn, but parents need to understand that a child will change his or her behavior **only** if he chooses to do so. Correct consequences will change the behavior of a dog or a rat, but correct choices will change the behavior of a child.

Parents must also avoid the temptation from our society to think that "self-esteem dictates every-

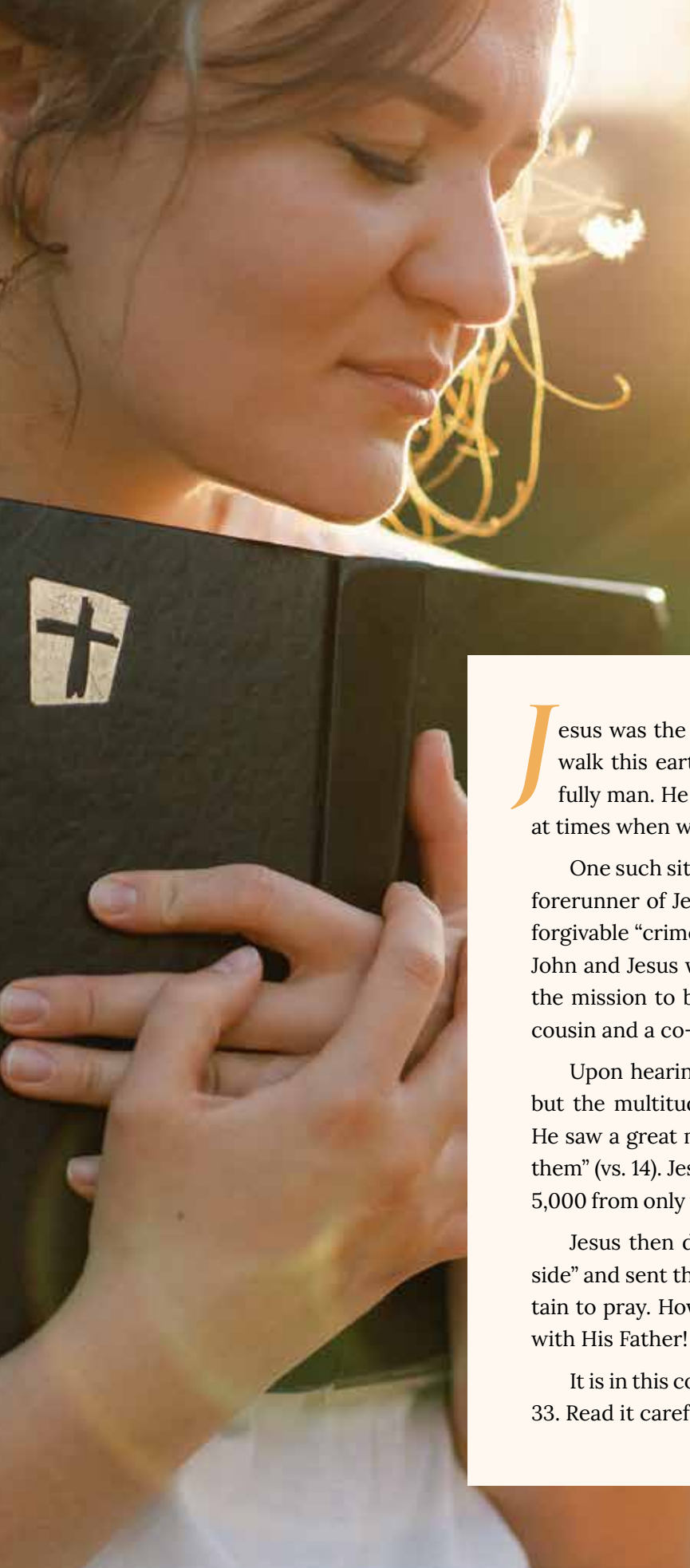


A close-up photograph of a baby's face and hand. The baby is wearing a white t-shirt and has a joyful expression, looking slightly to the right. An adult's hand is visible on the left, gently holding the baby's hand. The background is softly blurred, showing a light-colored wall and a hint of a window or doorway.

thing.” I do not know how many times I heard my mom tell me, “Son, don’t act too big for your britches.” The Scriptures do not put much emphasis on developing self-esteem. What Scriptures do teach is that God created each of us, and we need to be thankful to Him for that. He also uniquely designed each of us. But He emphasizes to all: “Serve other people!” “Put other people before yourself!” (cf. Matthew 16:24; 20:16; Luke 14:11).

Self-love is, too often, a stumbling block to serving our fellowman sacrificially as we are supposed to do (Matthew 22:39). The world would be better off if people loved themselves much less; people with high self-esteem tend to have low self-control. We do not just want our children to be leaders; we want them to be Christ-honoring leaders, serving other people and helping them bring out their best, having respect for others. Children need to be taught to contribute to their society (whether the home, the church, or the community) to the best of their ability. Also, since most people will not be leaders, parents need to help children learn how to be good followers, take responsibilities given to them, and do their best to fulfill them (Colossians 3:23).

Parents need to train their children, from an early age, to make appropriate choices that bring the most desired consequences. ■



LOOK  
UPON

*your eyes*

UPON

# Jesus

Kerri Epling

Jesus was the ultimate giver. He gave up His home in heaven to walk this earth. He gave up His exalted status to come and be fully man. He gave of His time, compassion, and goodness, even at times when we would think there was nothing left to give.

One such situation is found in Matthew 14. John, the cousin and forerunner of Jesus, had just been beheaded by Herod for the unforgivable “crime” of speaking the truth about marriage. In a sense, John and Jesus were not only relatives; they were also partners in the mission to bring salvation to the world. Jesus had lost both a cousin and a co-laborer for the coming kingdom.

Upon hearing the news of John’s death, Jesus sought solitude, but the multitudes still came to Him. “And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them” (vs. 14). Jesus proceeded to heal the sick and provide food for 5,000 from only five loaves and two fish, with much left over (vs. 20).

Jesus then directed His disciples to take a boat “to the other side” and sent the crowds away so that He could ascend the mountain to pray. How many things He must have needed to talk about with His Father!

It is in this context that we find our key passage: Matthew 14:22-33. Read it carefully and consider the following questions:

## Questions to consider

- What was the boat's situation? See verse 24.
- When and how did Jesus approach the boat?
- What did the disciples think? How did they feel?
- How did Jesus calm them?
- What was Peter's request, and did Jesus oblige?
- Why did Peter become afraid when he was on the water? Are we ever guilty of seeing what is around us instead of focusing on the One Who created it all?
- How did Jesus respond to Peter? Why might He have responded that way? Think about what the disciples had just witnessed.
- Why are verses 32 and 33 significant?
- Peter is looked down on for being afraid, but he did take that first step out of the boat that no others did. What are some "first steps" you have taken because of your faith in Christ? How can we be more like Peter and not be influenced by the inaction, fear, or influence of those around us who are not willing or able to take that first step?
- What things can cause us to "sink?" What is the remedy?



## Questions for children

- Where were Jesus' disciples when they saw Him coming?
- What did they think they saw?
- What did Peter do? Why did he get scared?
- How did Jesus help him?

I hope that it is becoming easier for you to find "grown-up lessons" in stories we generally teach to children. May God bless your efforts to train your children and teach others about the Bible! ■

## Suggestions for interaction with children

- Time for role play! Let some of your children be disciples and one of them be "Jesus." Then, let them take turns "walking on the water" and starting to sink before the one playing Jesus snatches them to safety.
- Test various items in water, to see if they sink or float. Ask the children what happens to those items when they are placed, for example, in a bathtub. Talk about the miracle Jesus performed by walking on the water.
- Sing "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus," and talk about how to keep our eyes on Jesus instead of on what is going on around us so that we can walk in faith.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Kerri at [editorial@ebglobal.org](mailto:editorial@ebglobal.org) with email subject of "Christian Family Study."





*the*

# **GAINES**

**D**aniel and Tiffany grew up in Christian homes. Daniel's father was a preacher, and Tiffany's father is an elder in their congregation; their mothers faithfully kept the home and helped to bring them up in the Lord. Tiffany and Daniel met at the Backwoods Christian Camp the summer before their senior year of high school. They had a long-distance relationship for a year before going to Freed-Hardeman University, where Daniel majored in Bible and Tiffany in elementary education.

They got married in May 1998, and God has blessed them with four children: Abby (who is currently studying at Freed-Hardeman University), Josiah, Levi, and Gracie Jane (whom they adopted from China). The

Gaines have worked with churches in Mississippi, Alabama, and Kentucky, and have done full-time mission work in Tanzania for three years. Daniel is currently the coordinator for Tanzania Missions and the Andrew Connally School of Preaching in Arusha, Tanzania. Tiffany homeschools their three younger children, making it easier for the family to travel when needed.

Recently, Daniel was asked to be the Missionary in Residence at Freed-Hardeman University, and Tiffany was asked to teach ladies' Bible courses. They feel it is a tremendous blessing to be able to be together as a family on campus and to have a small part in influencing college students in missions and in life. They are cherishing their time together and love having students in their home and their hearts.

They are not sure what the future holds for their lives, but they are always open to whatever road God leads them down, seeking ways to serve Him, love others, and change the world for His glory.



### **What advantages did you and Tiffany have growing up in the homes of church leaders?**

With Christian leaders for fathers, Jesus and His church were always a part of our lives as children. There were high standards of faithfulness and church participation that were both modeled and expected. Tiffany's father became an elder after she left home, but he was a deacon while she lived with them. Both of our parents made sure the family was at church every time the doors were open. Tiffany attended a small country church, and I attended several small-to-medium-sized congregations where my dad was a minister. This included a state-side church in North Carolina, where the congregation initially consisted of only four people. This was where I was baptized. Tiffany can remember attending Gospel meetings year-round, and even tent meetings in the hot summer weather. We both have beautiful memories of our mothers teaching us church songs. Growing up in Christian homes framed who we are today. We were loved beyond measure and were always pointed toward heaven.



### **What are your children's personalities, likes, and dislikes, and what are their favorite Bible verses?**

To have been raised in the same home, the differences in our children are immense in wonderful and unique ways. However, they all share the most important trait: love for Jesus and the family.

**Abby** is a junior social work major at FHU. She loves all things music and has a deep desire to help others. She was a very easy and lovely child and has grown into a beautiful adult in all ways. Her favorite verse is Micah 6:8. She says, "It's a one-sentence description of our purpose, even when we don't feel like we know what it is."

**Josiah** is the resident extrovert. He never meets a stranger. He wants to be either a National Park ranger or a missionary when he grows up. He loves to give devotional talks and share the Bible. His favorite verse is Joshua 1:9. He says that it reminds him daily to be strong and courageous and that the Lord is always with him.

**Levi** is the happy-go-lucky child in the family. He is content to play Legos and Star Wars all day long. He enjoyed our time in Tanzania. He loves to read, is great at Bible facts, and is a talented song leader. He says that his favorite verse is Matthew 28:19 because it reminds him of his family.

**Gracie Jane** has grown so much since becoming a Gaines in 2019. She had many health problems, but she has learned to eat, walk, and now talk! She loves to be with "Mama." Her best friend is Levi. Gracie is very loving and frequently gives out hugs. She loves being included, and always wants to "match" what others are doing. She loves to sing "Blue Skies and Rainbows" and "Nothing but the Blood of Jesus." Her mouth may not be able to say all of the words, but her heart surely does!



***Daniel's mother suffered from cancer for many years. How has this affected your marriage and your work for the Lord?***

When Daniel was in middle school, his mother was diagnosed with cancer. Her long battle with cancer kept his family from moving to the mission field. Just two months after we got married, she lost her battle; both of us were in the room when she passed away. She was a beautiful Christian woman. She always wanted to go back to Africa, and while she was not able to go, we like to think that she would be happy to know that Daniel did and continues to work to save souls in Tanzania. When she passed, we were sophomores at FHU but were working as interns for a church in Briensburg, KY. Church work has always been a part of our lives and marriage from the very beginning.

***What advice would you give to families trying to raise faithful children?***

Keep God **in** your home. Keep the name of Jesus in your daily conversations. Make family Bible time a priority. It may look different for every family: singing Bible class songs for little ones, reading Bible picture books, or telling a Bible story with words understandable for them; older ones may want to play Bible trivia games or take part in a discussion about



a passage after reading it. Devotional songs are wonderful for any age. Say that you are sorry when you make mistakes. Let them see you apologize and make things right with any member of the family. Take your children when you visit others; allow them to see you in personal Bible study. Teach them to pray and to talk to God daily, to thank Him at all times, not just before a meal or sleep but also when you are safe in traffic or see a beautiful fall tree. Help them to see that God's Word is written to every soul on earth, that He loves them all, and that we should love them too. Teach them that we have a great responsibility in helping them get to heaven and that we shouldn't be greedy with the beautiful story of redemption. Let them see you do the hard things because God said to do them. The Gospel is for all! Speak kindly to one another. When you sow love for God and one another inside your home, your children will sow it in their homes one day as well, and they will spread the Gospel one family at a time.

***You have adopted Gracie Jane. What advice would you give families who are thinking about international adoption?***

We are told to care for the widows and orphans in their affliction (James 1:27). John 14:18 says, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." God sets a beautiful example of adoption for us by making us all His children. Does this mean everyone should adopt? No. Adoption is not right for every family, but every family has a responsibility to orphans. Pray for families adopting. Help financially, if you can. Offer respite when they bring a child home. Love and encourage them. If you are ready to grow your family, adoption is a beautiful way to do it. There are so many children waiting for families. Do your research and find a country that supports international adoption. Ask about the timeline and the costs of adoption, and read up on the trauma of abandoned children. Pray, pray, pray. Be sure that both of you **want** to adopt, not just tolerate it for the other. Know that your life will change forever in some really hard ways and some really wonderful ways as well. Realize that asking your biological children for their opinion will be just that: a child's opinion. Our children were unsure when we told them, but now they are so glad we made this decision. We are so thankful we adopted and are happy to walk with anyone through the long and difficult process. Our Gracie has made our en-



tire family better in many, many ways. What stronger way is there to do mission work than to take a child who wouldn't otherwise know Christ and give him/her a Christian family?

***Your family is also involved in hosting others at home. What advice would you give to a family who wants to host others for a meal but are nervous about it?***

Take on the challenge! Tiffany has hosted 40 people in a tiny cinder block house with four rooms total. She made food that was easy to prepare for a crowd, such as tacos, beans and rice, or soups. Realize that it is so much more about the company than the food. Never feel that your home isn't nice enough or big enough. Start small by inviting friends over for coffee or tea; then you can move on to a meal. Things do not need to be perfect or greatly plentiful to have others in your home. Let them see life in your home. It will give others the courage to host when things aren't picture-perfect. Have some topics of conversation ready in case there's a lull in conversation. This will help you find common ground. If words are difficult, play a game to break the ice! Relationships don't need a pricey meal or a nice home to form; people just need to feel welcome and loved. In Tanzania, if you ever knock on a door, you will hear, "Karibu!" which means "Welcome!" I've had tea in many Tanzanian homes that were made of nothing more than mud, and I have never felt more welcome. Just do the inviting and let God help with the bonding together.

***You are involved with the Andrew Connally School of Preaching and Tanzania Missions. If someone wants to support these works, where should he send funds?***

There are two main ways to support this work.

Give online at the Hoover website:

[hooverchurchofchrist.org/ministries/foreign-mission-works](https://hooverchurchofchrist.org/ministries/foreign-mission-works)

Click the "Give to Tanzania" button.

Send a check to the Hoover church of Christ. Write in the memo line, "Tanzania Missions," and mail it to:

**Tanzania Missions  
C/O Hoover church of Christ  
3248 Lorna Rd.  
Hoover, AL 35216 ■**



# 7 tips to LISTENING ethically

Moisés Pinedo



One of our Lord's favorite statements was, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 11:15). He was not only concerned that we "hear" and about "what" we hear (Mark 4:24), but also about "**how**" we hear (Luke 8:18). Part of this concern relates to listening ethically.

Besides listening to others in regular conversation, you probably have several opportunities to listen to a public speaker—whether a classmate who gives a speech in front of your high school class, a schoolteacher or a college professor who teaches your class, or the preacher who delivers a sermon at your home congregation. How are you to listen to them? Here are seven tips for listening ethically:

**1 Be mentally and physically prepared to listen.** This point is often overlooked because we don't usually think about listening as an activity that requires preparation. Whenever possible—especially when you know that a speech is going to take place (for example, on Sunday morning for a Bible class or sermon, or Monday morning for a class at your school), try to be prepared to listen. If you stay up late at night watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the web, you may be mentally and physically drained the next morning to give your full attention to the one speaking. Being prepared also relates to dressing appropriately and arriving on time. All these things convey the idea: "This opportunity to listen is important to me, and I am here, ready to listen."

**2 Minimize distractions.** When going to listen to a speech, take with you only those things that will enhance your listening (for example, your Bible for a Bible class or sermon, a notebook and pen to take notes, or a laptop for your school class if this is recommended or allowed). Avoid taking things that will distract your mind, like snacks, drinks, headphones, etc. Yes, turn off your cell phone or put it on silent mode. If you use a tablet or a laptop, close any tabs or programs that may tempt you to do anything other than listening. During the speech, avoid whispering, talking, or doing any other activity that may distract others. If someone else is distracting you, gently let him/her know that you want to listen to the speech.

**3 Set positive expectations.** If you think the speech will be boring or useless, then, most likely, it will be—at least for you. Whether we are talking about your Bible teacher, your teacher at school, or a classmate who gives a speech, he/she deserves a fair opportunity to be listened to. Do not prejudge the speaker due to age, education, race, etc., and avoid jumping to conclusions while the speaker is still talking. You may think you know what needs to be known about a subject and decide to tune out, but the truth is that you never know when you may learn something new; even if you don't, remember that listening ethically still requires proper expectation and attention.



**4 Be a benevolent listener.** Speaking in public is not an easy task; most people fear it! In fact, when people are asked about their common fears, public speaking usually ranks high on the list, sometimes even before the fear of dying.<sup>2</sup> This is why comedian Jerry Seinfeld once joked that, at a funeral, the average person “would rather be in the casket than doing the eulogy.” The natural fear of public speaking may cause a speaker to make a few mistakes. But even if the speaker handles nerves very well, there is no one who always delivers a perfect speech without any trace of mispronunciation or forgetfulness. Do not discount the value of a speech due to these minor mistakes.

**5 Refrain your mind from wandering.** Controlling the mind may be one of the most difficult tasks when listening ethically—since it happens inside of us, and, most likely, no one may detect it. You are “present” there—your head may be facing the speaker, yet your mind is somewhere else. I have to admit that this is not easy for me, especially if the speaker is soft-spoken or there is much going on in my life. But this is still an important part of listening ethically.

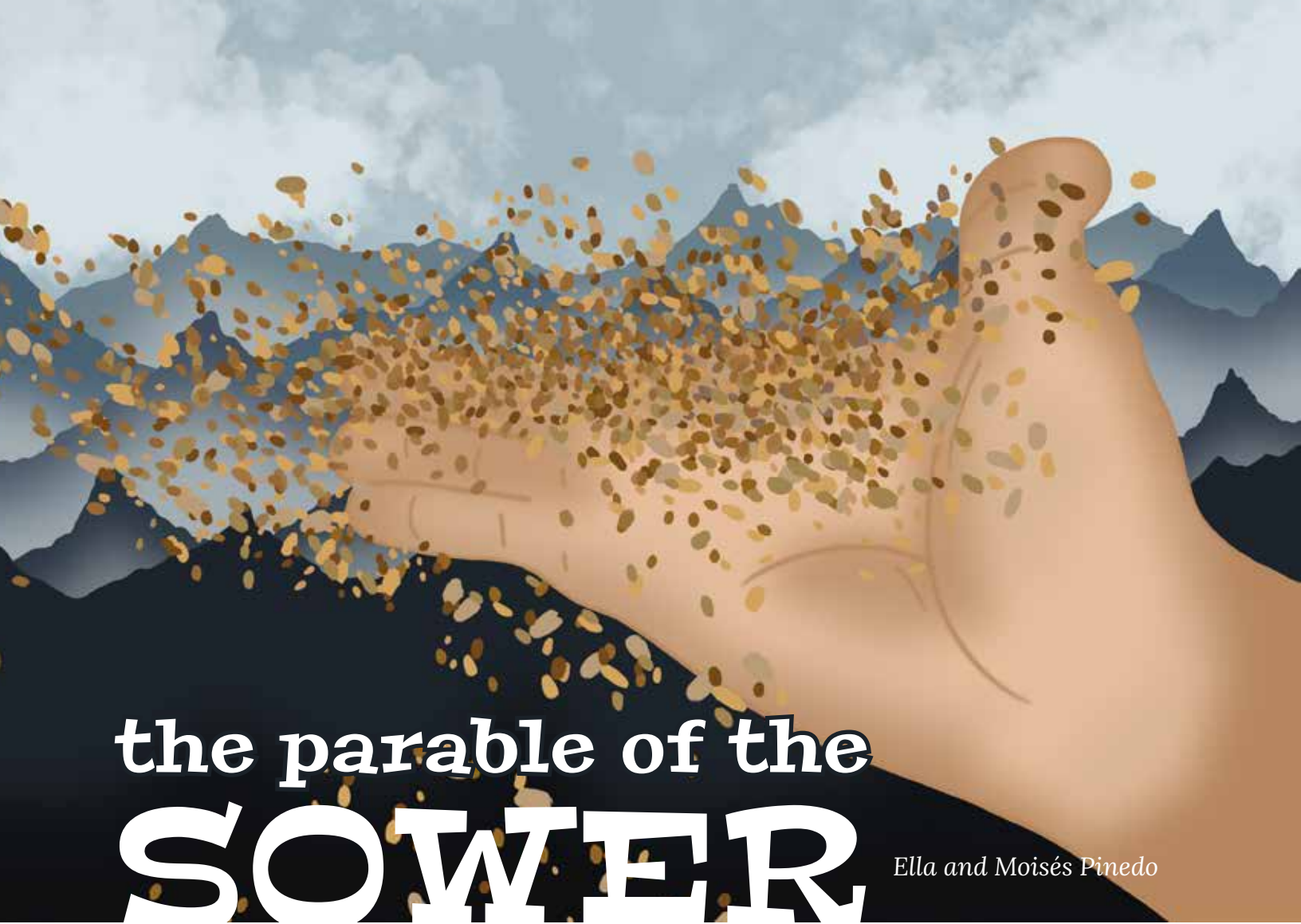
**6 Give some visual signs of your attention.** Failing to do so may not be considered an “ethical issue,” but this is important in view of how we would like others to treat us (Matthew 7:12). When someone speaks in public, then he/she realizes how important feedback is. Nodding your head in agreement, smiling when a comment is funny, or showing any other sign of agreement may mean a great deal to the speaker. When I speak, I look around the audience for those people who actively give me signs of positive feedback. This lets me know that the message is being transmitted as intended and that what I am saying matters to the audience. This constant feedback is like a push to get me to the end.

**7 Listen with the truth by your side.** There is a time when listening ethically means to “close your ears” to listening. As you go to school or college, you will listen to many things that are plainly wrong. Even though you are still expected to respect your teachers and be attentive to what they say, remember that not everything your teachers say is ethically correct or biblically sound. You need to learn to filter information (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:21) in order not to be “carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14). Whenever you listen, even to a sermon from the pulpit, do it with an open ear and an open Bible.

If you follow these tips, you will become a better listener, but best of all, you will gain more knowledge and you will grow as a person. If you apply these tips to listening to God’s Word, then the benefits will be eternal. ■



1. The following points were developed from suggestions given by students of a Public Speaking class at Heritage Christian University in Florence, Alabama.
2. See Christopher Ingraham, “America’s Top Fears: Public Speaking, Heights and Bugs,” *The Washington Post*, October 30, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/10/30/clowns-are-twice-as-scary-to-democrats-as-they-are-to-republicans/>.



# the parable of the SOWER

*Ella and Moisés Pinedo*

**In** Matthew 13, Jesus told a parable about a man sowing seed with the hopes that it will grow and produce fruit. This short parable has great meaning. I really like how Jesus told this story and then explained its meaning. Read the parable in verses 1-9 and then the explanation in verses 18-23; remember that a parable is “an earthly story with a spiritual meaning.”

## ***The Seed by the Wayside***

As the sower was scattering seed, part of the seed fell by the wayside and was eaten up quickly by the birds. Jesus said that this refers to those who hear the Word but do not understand it, and then the devil comes and quickly snatches away the Word from their hearts. Why didn't they understand the Word? Maybe they were not paying attention, maybe they were not serious about what was being taught, or maybe the teaching was difficult and they did not bother to ask.

From the parallel account, we learn that the disciples asked Jesus “about the parable” (Mark 4:10). That is a great way to understand the Word and avoid the devil from snatching it from our hearts. I definitely don't want to be like this unproductive soil!

## ***The Seed on Stony Ground***

Part of the seed fell on stony ground and quickly sprang up but died when the sun began to heat. Jesus said that this refers to those who hear the Word of God but quickly fall away from the truth. In contrast to the previous group, these people have a good attitude, but not for long. They get tired due to difficulties and soon give up on the Lord and His church; they just do not have deep roots in God's Word. I definitely do not want to be known as a person who gives up on Jesus! Although following Jesus is not easy and requires endurance, it is worth it!



## The Seed Among Thorns

Part of the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns choked it. Jesus said that this refers to those who hear the Word but become unproductive due to the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. This makes me stop and think: "My life can be ruined if I focus my attention on money and the pleasures of the world." Things can make us feel "happy," but this "happiness" doesn't last. It is easy to get trapped by our desires and want more and more money and things. But money can't buy our way into heaven! It is an earthly treasure that we cannot take with us. Now, having money or material things is not wrong, but we are to focus on doing God's will, making treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). I definitely don't want to end up as those who are choked by the "thorns" of the world!

## The Seed on Good Ground

Part of the seed fell on good ground and produced much fruit. Jesus said that this refers to those who hear the Word of God, understand it, and produce

fruit by practicing the Word. These are the people who are safe in the hands of Christ (Romans 8:31-39).

Jesus told many parables, but this one really stands out to me. It helps me realize what kind of servant of God I want to be: I want to be a servant who follows Him for the rest of my life and bears much fruit for Him. Don't you?

It also helps me realize that there are many people in the world who will not receive God's Word or will fall away from it, and I want to help. How? I can share what I know from God's Word with them, I can show Christ through my actions and words, and I can encourage them to become good ground, so they can also be safe in Christ.

Good ground... That is what I want to be! ■

Online and printed Spanish materials for children at [www.ebherencia.org](http://www.ebherencia.org)  
Contact [editorial@ebglobal.org](mailto:editorial@ebglobal.org)

## Match the

# GROUND

Match each ground with its meaning by connecting it with a line.



Illustrations on this spread by  
**Kelsey Pinedo** (age 13)



**Wayside**

**Those who are deceived by the world and riches**

**Stony ground**

**Those who bear much fruit**

**Thorny ground**

**Those who hear the Word but do not understand it**

**Good ground**

**Those who stumble due to difficulties**



To ask a family-related question to the editors, go to

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**Q:** *How can we know that we really love each other in a marriage relationship?*

—LA ROMANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Love is expressed in action, behavior, words, and attitudes: “Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Is this how you are treating your spouse? Ask your spouse how you measure up and what you might need to do to show and express your love more visibly. —PH

**Q:** *What can I do if my wife does not want to submit to me?* —PAZ DE ARIPORO, COLOMBIA

To answer this question, let me lead your attention to 1 Peter 3:7: “Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

First, analyze your own character, attitudes, and demands. Is there anything in your conduct that may be contributing to your wife not wanting to submit to you? Like a prayer, submission may be hindered by a husband’s imprudent way of life. Second, are you “honoring your wife?” Not only the husband is to put away anything that hinders submission, but he is also to actively promote submission by loving his wife the way Jesus loves the church (cf. Ephesians 5:25). It is hard for a wife not to submit to a husband who loves her that way. Third, talk to her. You may think you are treating your wife as a “weaker vessel,” but she may feel more like a “disposable cup” in your hands. Listen to her kindly and allow her to express how she feels about your leadership (you may need to revisit those passages that talk about self-denying, sacrifice, and

love). This will also allow you to perceive whether she understands biblical submission. If your wife is a new Christian, she may need further loving instruction on the subject; if she is not a Christian, then she will need first to be instructed in the faith that requires submission from all (Ephesians 5:21). Remember that, even though Christian wives are instructed to submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24), true submission cannot be forced. Make her work of submission easier by following Jesus’ example, and pray that she will follow the church’s submission example. —MP

**Q:** *How can a parent regain the trust of his/her children after having mistreated them verbally and physically?* —GUATEMALA

Relationships are a bridge from one heart to another. Bridges can be damaged; they can even be destroyed. But bridges are built on columns to provide support. Relationships also have support underneath them in the sense that human beings, even strangers, have fundamental respect (generally speaking) for each other. If you have hurt your relationship with your children so that the relationship is destroyed, you may have to start from the very foundation of human relationships. It takes time to rebuild a relationship that took years to damage or destroy. You have to be patient and live out Christ’s teachings in your life toward your children as much as possible. Apologize for what you have said or done in the past that was wrong; look for small opportunities or brief times to show love and respect for them; and pray that the relationship can be restored to a healthy level. —PH ■