



SPEAK FOR YOURSELF! PART II

—YOUR THOUGHTS, REACTIONS, AND REPLIES TO
"THE PROFESSIONALS"

"Bring it on!"

By Lucy, Mexico

Dearest Daniel,

I was meaning to answer you personally as you sent me your letter personally, but since it's all public now...

I'm a 20-year-old girl. I've also lived most of my life in the Family; was born and raised within our walls. I've heard stories and have had my share of those tough situations. I've been working with kids since I was pretty much 11 (my parents had 12 kids—couldn't run away from it. Ha!). I've been denied movies, Nintendo, going out on my own on my W&R, ice skating, and even ice cream!—Really! I've had lots of loneliness trials. I've had communication problems with FGAs. Rarely did I get any personal funds. And I have dear friends who've left the Family too.

Yet I'm still here. Why? Well, let me put it plain and simple: I'm not looking for ways to have more fun, chill out, have a great time, go out to discos, party, and just relax. I was born to be a missionary! Yes, I was! And with the crown comes the sacrifice.

Although it's sad to say, you seem to have taken quite the negative side. If you "love us" so much and you think we're

so great, why are you here complaining, moaning, and groaning? Get a life! Make up your mind and go for it!

This is a wonderful life that God has given me. I couldn't be any more thankful and happy that out of all those millions, He chose me! He's given me the blessing of working with wonderful, sweet, and loving FGAs (my best friend was an FGA, and still is helping me from the Other Side). Though at times we have had differences of opinion and I sometimes ended up being outvoted, they were always concerned for my well-being, tried hard to keep me happy and challenged, and I truly treasure their counsel and help. And believe you me, I know many more young people who think this way too!

The Lord has made me a teacher of many children. While there have been situations that at the time were pretty rough, I can't help but marvel at the beauties I helped raise, teach, and train. He's made me go through many loneliness trials to draw me closer to Him, and teach me so much. Now I don't think I could have done it without those lonely times. And it makes me appreciate my boyfriend so much!

The Lord didn't give me piles of money to buy whatever I wanted, but He never let

me go naked or hungry, or without a roof to sleep under!—And that is basically all I need. He has given me wonderful friends who ended up leaving the Family and therefore made me sad at the time, but now I see that He’s working in their lives. He gave me music that, yes, at times I disliked and would get upset when adults would not let us listen to anything else. But now I listen to it and it makes me feel so good and proud of being in this beautiful Family!—You know, those songs that say just the right words and perfectly express your feelings.

And then there’s the Lord’s love for us little specks of nothingness! Now, after He’s given me all my needs, wants, and desires, who am I to question His ways? I would feel stupid! Just how ridiculous is it to go around telling the coach how “strict” he is because he’s requiring the players to practice before an important game? Whose side are you on anyway?

My goal is to become a PROFESSIONAL! And if that means little personal money, less partying, and more sacrifice ... then BRING IT ON! The outcome is worth it!

We LOVE the Family!

By A. (20, female), Brazil

I had received Daniel’s e-mail before “The Professionals” came out, and had sent a response to the address that sent it. Of course, Daniel never mentioned the numerous responses he must’ve received disagreeing with him. But here’s mine:

Hi anonymous,

Since you took the liberty to just blurt out your views and perspectives on the various topics you had on your mind, I guess I’ll also take the liberty to just blurt

out what I think of your letter.

For starters, if you don’t like the Family’s lifestyle, then why in the world are you still in it? Man, nobody is forcing you to stay. It’s not for everyone, so why not get a life somewhere else where you can do all those things you complain about having to abstain from? If it’s so true that “the Family is in your blood and is your upbringing and you don’t know what you’d do if you left,” then why are you trying to tear it apart by trampling on it with your misconceptions and personal complaints?

I’m a 20-year-old, Family-born young person who has been through a lot of the “scenarios” pictured in your letter, and at least for me, it’s definitely not the way you put it. Granted, life in the Family isn’t a bed of roses, but if I had the chance to choose my lifestyle I’d go for it all over again, ups and downs included, because I know what I want in life. I don’t mind the “sacrifices” that come with it. You must know that everything comes with a price, no matter where you are or what you do. People have been having to adapt to situations, accept policies, and deal with minor misdemeanors since the beginning of time—all for the passion of being or doing what they feel is their calling in life. With the Family it’s the same thing.

You’ll have to admit that you were very narrow-minded in a lot of the points you brought up, not to mention wrong in several of them. I could go on for hours but I’ll take two of your “scenarios.” First, the one on education: I beg to differ from your train of thought on that one. You see, having never attended outside school I didn’t have “real documented education” (as you put it). So what did I do? I just took a government test—which by the way I passed with excellent grades—and got a legal high school diploma. Does it make

my education any better? Nope, but it sure proves that Family education is tops! It's not a big deal to do it.

And the one on partial excom, which according to you is dealt with so superfluously by the office. ... Guess you haven't been through that scenario yourself or you'd know it doesn't go that way. I was put on partial excom once, and let me tell you, the situation was dealt with in such a loving yet meticulous manner by the COs. It was thoroughly investigated, as opposed to the way you put it, and in my case those months were a priceless time in my life in which I had the opportunity to check my heart and see where I was at, and to recommit myself to being the full-time disciple that the CM Family needs.

You might have traveled all over and might know a lot of people, but that doesn't grant you the right to speak for others the way you did. You put words in the mouths of many of us by generalizing. But guess what? I don't agree with you. And I do have the guts to speak out and sign my name to what I say. There are many of us (and I took the time to personally ask a large number of young people I know) who listen to the FTTs, get along with the FGAs, love witnessing, have loads of fun, and even have bank accounts.

We love the Family. We enjoy our lifestyle and don't want to leave the Family. We are convinced it's the place where we want our children to be brought up, but I guess you just skipped us in your travels. You say you love the Family, but let me ask you, what definition does "love" have in your vocabulary? Because if loving the Family means tearing it apart, then my definition of love surely differs from yours. I know the Family is the most loving, rewarding, challenging, and happiest place to live—and if you gave it your all and gave the Lord a chance, you'd end up

convinced that it's well worth living and dying for! If I were you, I'd take some time to evaluate my life and decide where my place is. I'll be praying for you.

Forgetting those things which are behind

By Chris (SGA), Brazil

I am a CM member, and some of the things Daniel said made me angry. For example, the way he talked about the FTTs. I don't know if I'm right all the way, but I've heard comments from young people in the Family that don't particularly like the FTTs and that put them down, saying that they hate the fact that the Family copies System music styles, etc. Most (if not, all) of these people I've met that have expressed this feeling have never seemed to have a deep concern for and love for the continuation of the Family as a spiritual movement, changing lives around the globe, winning the lost before the Beast arises. So since they don't seem to be concerned about more important things, it makes me believe that they would easily complain about anything that doesn't suit their style. I was thinking a lot about this subject of the FTTs, and all I've heard from various young people makes me think that they have their priorities mixed up pretty bad.

I like music very much. I know it can be an important part of our lives. It's spiritual, and as Dad said years ago, music affects you in different ways. I know what it feels like to be living in a place without a lot to do—and in particular, about controlling our desire for the type of music we'd prefer. I lived in China for three years, and during that time I had to forgo a lot of pleasures that simply weren't available there, like fellowships, parties, dance nights, frequent sex, etc.

It's easy to get frustrated with that and start going down the compromised road of feeling: *Why can't I have just a little more freedom to party with my System friends? The young Chinese people aren't that badly polluted with the Western spirit, and I need more than Family music to inspire me to continue to serve the Lord.* Of course, it's not like I lived three perfect years there and never had any trials, but I wonder what's happened to the sacrificial, thankful attitude this Family once had?

I wonder why some of us young people place more importance on the tune and sound of a song than on the message and spirit of it! I wonder why we can't just open our Bibles every now and then and remember how Moses had to be tested by God for 40 years before he could be used? Looking at how short time is here by comparison, why do we murmur and grumble about why we can't conform to the world just a bit, trying to prove that there isn't anything wrong with it? I can't understand how, after years of the FGAs' hard, diligent work to keep and make this Family what it is now, and their undying faith in us young people, their countless stories of how they had to step out by faith time and again, trusting God (as in the illustration in one of the MO books of Dad sawing off the branch he was standing on) that some of us feel free to start tearing down and mocking some aspects or rules of Family life.

To be honest, it saddens me! I try to keep the vision daily of what the Lord wants to do through us. I am by no means perfect, but I do want to try to serve the Lord in the CM Family—thereby being thankful for whatever we have. I honestly love a lot of the tunes in the FTTs. Maybe one thing that Daniel forgot to realize is that in mocking and putting down the FTTs and the Family's musicians, he is, as a

logical consequence, mocking the Lord. I'll explain why I think this: From all I've read in the pubs and heard, Family musicians spend a lot of time getting soaked in the Word and making their best effort to stay free of worldliness, so that they can use their talent in music to hear from Heaven for more Heavenly music.

I remember that Letter about music that came out a few years ago which said how the Lord was going to start pouring Heavenly music out to the musicians that would take time to listen. So, in essence, what these faithful musicians are doing is laying down their lives to be "robots" for the Lord in this way, obeying His tall order of not conforming to the brackish or poisonous waters. I've also read many testimonies from these dear, faithful musicians that say that their lives have changed for the better by letting the Lord do this through them. Therefore, I can only conclude that if they're making the sacrifice to let the Lord control any songs, lyrics, and tunes they produce—some even getting the tune or whole song in a vision—that they're only doing what the Lord wants. So if anyone wants to mock their music, they're inevitably making a statement that goes directly against the Lord's call in that field. How can anyone have the guts to say that to Jesus?

I'm artistic and the Lord's been encouraging me to use that more for Him. It's like that time when someone complained about the Heavenly picture Jac Sailor drew for one of the posters. Well, as we all know, Dad got pretty fed up and angry with that girl who felt she had the right to outright grumble about the style Dad had asked Jac to use. Now, my question is, if Dad got angry about a girl grumbling about a picture he had personally dictated to the artist, I wonder how the Lord feels about someone

grumbling about the way *He* is leading the Family in music? Maybe we need to once again get back to the Garden and realize that Jesus started this Family as a new nation, therefore having new things, being separate from the world, etc.

I believe the Lord wants to use all of our talents for Him. He wants us to pray about how we can use our talents for Him. So it bothers me when it comes to comparing our style of life, whether in music, art or something else, with the System! I wish people would be thankful for what we have, and look at the doughnut instead of the hole.

I completely understand the trials this 20-year-old girl went through in Daniel's letter. But, like I said, I lived for three years in a foreign land without many of the privileges other people in the Family have available to them. Even though it was tough at times, and I did complain at times, I can still say with conviction now that "none of these things move me." I plan to go back to China very soon after visiting my family. I get hit with thoughts that it will be too tough for me, that I won't make it, or that I might as well serve the Lord in a different place, but still in the CM Family, of course. Well, I suppose the Lord would still be happy with my service wherever I decide to serve Him, but the thing is that deep in my heart, I know my calling is in China. I cannot deny it.

Another thing Daniel said that I want to disprove is that we young people are starting young people Homes in order to get away from the FGAs. That's false! Earlier this year, the Lord put a burden deep in my heart to pioneer a new place in China that has never been reached by the Family. I plan to start a Home there, and yes, hopefully with a few other young, dedicated people, as well as a couple of FGAs. But I never had the intention of

getting away from the FGAs. I also know of other young people that have started Homes without that intention. I do have a desire to work with other young people, since I know it can be fun and thrilling, but equally, I've had a lot of fun working with other FGAs in China as well.

I want to make something clear here: I don't look down on people that feel they can't make it for the Lord on a far-flung mission field and eventually get tired of not having fellowship. I personally know a few young people in China that found it was too hard for them, and I don't see anything wrong with them having faith to serve the Lord elsewhere, as long as they still have a desire to serve Him. To me, the conclusion that it is the Family's fault if a young person finds life on a far-flung mission field too hard is not logical.

The Lord has given us the liberty to choose where we want to serve Him according to our faith, and in most cases, as Dad taught us, there is a wide variety of choices within the tunnel of His will. So, the fact that there's plenty in the Word about being able to operate according to your faith proves that that decision is between us personally and the Lord. It can't be blamed on the Family if the Home that a young person is in is at least trying to make the best of things. If the young person finds it too difficult, how can they blame the Family?

In general, I believe that a lot of us young people (including myself at times) have become a bit spoiled, taking anything we find too hard to handle or cope with as a mountain of obstacles that makes us complain that Family rules are simply too tough and unnecessary. As a young person, I am concerned about this attitude that I've seen in many cases, and that I even had a lot of before going to China. There are times when I find things in the

Family to be too tough, so it's not like I'm exempt from those feelings either. But, it stands to reason (as the Lord's said numerous times) that if we're going to be the hope of the future, we need to simply accept the training we're receiving now, which goes hand in hand with the rules, so we can do a better job for Him, and, like Peter said, be professional Christians of the Endtime.

Please know, Mama and Peter, that I stand with you. No matter what kind of mistakes some FGAs made in the past, I—and hopefully we all—can “forget the past and look forward to the things which are before, pressing towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

“I am persuaded!”

By D. (22), India

Hi, Daniel!

I hope you were able to go through the many replies that your letter got. I sure had lots to say to you, but our King Peter and others said most of the things I would have. Since you took the freedom to send your letter to my e-mail box and express how I felt about certain things in the Family—and to top it off, *your* views as well—here is what I have to say about it.

You say you love Mama and Peter, the Family, and all that, but where does your love begin and where does it end? What does your belief in the Lord and the Bible have to do with you living in the Family? What exactly *do* you like about our lifestyle?

I've been through hard times in the Family, and I must say it's not easy at times, but it sure is worth it. I have had my very best friends leave the Family one after the other. I've gone through some bad experiences, but that doesn't make me value any less the place that I feel in my

heart is where the Lord wants me to serve Him. The Family is full of people that make mistakes, but who also strive to do their best for Jesus; they have given up their dreams, plans, and possessions to follow Him as closely as they can. That's what I love about the Family!

And as far as your comments about the young people, including myself, I want to let you know that speaking on behalf of some of my friends in *my* Home, we're here because we love Jesus and have agreed to be professionals as Peter said. You got that? If you did, it might help you and others know that come what may, we are here to stay! “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

About Family music, I want to thank all those who work for hours on end producing OUR Family music. It's true that it may not seem to be up to par with some of the System's music, but who cares? Me? Not really. I think that as long as it's got our message and variety in styles, that's enough. If you were on a diet and had to choose between a piece of fruit and a bar of chocolate, wouldn't the smartest thing be to eat the fruit? So likewise, my dear brother, in the Family the smartest thing would be ... right!—Family music!

Obviously you're clueless!

By a female teen, Europe

Hey, Daniel!

I wanted to reply to you, since this is what you asked for, and since, being a young person in the Family, I am included in the “young people” in your letter. You

touched on many topics and I won't lose time answering them since our king already spent enough of his answering you, and I must say he did a wonderful job; no comments needed.

One subject, though, I felt I have to speak on, as touchy as it may be. I'm talking about abuse. Daniel, you feel free to bring up a subject that has been so expounded on, because you feel that you have been wronged. If you have, I am praying for you, that you can get over it. Others have gotten over it, and they might not appreciate you bringing up this subject again.

You know what, Daniel? You are not the only one. I am *not* a Family-born young person, I grew up in the System and joined when I was 15. Guess what? I was abused too—in the System! As a matter of fact, I have three sisters who were abused too. My best friend? The same, and her sister. My classmate? The same. And there are others who will never have the courage to talk about it. All these are people who have never heard of the Family.

Before joining the Family, I was once beaten till I was unconscious. I didn't think it was something rare, 'cause it wasn't. Believe me, Daniel, out there abuse is not uncommon, it's just that you don't hear about it. I'm not bringing this up because I want you to know how sad my life was, but because I want you to realize that these things happen every day throughout the whole world. I grew up in a very westernized and "civil" country, yet these things were fairly commonplace.

No one ever apologized to me for what had happened, or to my friends. No one took time to explain things to me, or to feel sorry for me. That was just life. I didn't spend half my life thinking back about it and feeling sorry for myself, because the past is the past, and you gotta go on. Of

course it hurt, and it still does sometimes, but I can't let the rest of my life be ruined by it, and many do just like I do.

God bless our leaders that have been going on and on about this, for what, 20 years? They have explained it over and over again, apologizing God knows how many times, and now it's time to move on. After all that's been said on the subject, I feel you're pushing it a little too much, Daniel. It was not "the Family" who did this to you, and it was not because you were *in* the Family that it happened.

You obviously have no idea of what is out there, or else you would keep quiet and thank the Lord that you have been so protected. Teens in the world have a lot to deal with that you have no idea about.

The Family is a wonderful place, where teens have opportunities that not many others have. I was a teen in the System, and I am one in the Family. And guess what?—I love it here! The Family standard is so high. I wish it were the same everywhere.

Never have I seen so much respect from adults towards teenagers. The FGAs in my Home are wonderful people who show respect and admiration for me, although I'm not even half their age. They respect me, and they are helping me to fight my battles.

Why do you think the Family is going through so many changes? Why do you think there are the boards now? Because of you, and many others who are unhappy with the present situation. Our leaders want us to be happy, and they give their life to make this happen.

Daniel, sincerely, I think you should stop for a minute and count your blessings, because they are many! You have been given a wonderful opportunity by the Lord, and it would be a pity to see you throw it away because of the pea under

your mattress. I am praying for you.

PS.: Just so you know, I love the TCDs. I would be sad if the Family would stop producing them. God bless you, musicians!

“Are you macho enough to be a disciple?”

By Kriz (16), Brazil

Dear Daniel (a.k.a. the anonymous dude that wrote the personal, yet open, “let’s get rid of the rules” letter):

After reading your letter I couldn’t help the wish to sit down and write you all that I think of it. But fortunately, our dear “King P:” spared me the trouble, by writing back the exact same things I would have said, only he was a little more polite than I would’ve been. However, there’s one thing I want to make a quick comment about.

You say that if the Family doesn’t change soon, there won’t be anyone but people over 40 left in it. WRONG! At least my friends and I (that is, *real* friends, not just people you hang around with) happen to completely disagree with you! The way the Family’s going—I’M IN IT! I’m staying all the way, and so are they, more than ever! Not just that, but all the young new disciples we’re winning and will keep on winning are gonna be there as well. They’ve had enough “fun” already. What they really wanna do now is serve the Lord, be real disciples, and win the world for Him, whatever it takes.

You can go to your little pub and have your little “fun,” while I give my life and my all to serve the Lord, whatever sacrifices it may require. Laugh if you want, but once we’re up There receiving our rewards, we’ll see who laughs last!

Are you macho enough to be a disciple?

And by the way, different from you, I’m no anonymous coward. I have no shame in showing my face and letting everyone know who I am and what I stand for (and no offense, but I think I stand for much better things than you do)! So anyone reading this personal-yet-open letter can write me and say what they think at krizbl@hotmail.com.

But don’t forget it: We’re a Revolution!! Are YOU in it?

There to counter the discouragement

By Kaylee (SGA), Cameroon

Mama and Peter, I just wanted to say thank you very much for going through all the trouble of answering the SGA in “The Professionals” GN. I can’t express how much it meant to me to be able to read it. Not because I had the same doubts and questions, but because I’ve been trying to help quite a few young people in recent years and have met some with similar attitudes. I had only a vague idea of how to handle them. Many of them were my friends that I understood and felt for, and even though I could see what was wrong, I didn’t know how to go about correcting it in a successful, lasting, and non-self-righteous way.

Your Letter gave me hope for the future. I’ve been quite discouraged about the situation with our young people. Though the Lord has given me the burden for JETTs and junior teens, the discouragement, lack of knowing how to handle the different aspects of FGA vs. teen situations, the teens themselves, their misuse of trust, and the hurt some of them caused our Homes or work, ran deeply in my heart. I’m sorry to say that my conclusion was to give up on them and

to withdraw from doing anything for them for fear of being hurt and disappointed again. Putting it like this on paper is even surprising to me as it seems so selfish. LHM! Anyway, I found a lot of answers in your Letter, and it's been a big help to me and gave me new hope.

What I love most about your answers to this SGA's letter is that they are specific about problems that are very real. I especially appreciated the insight into the difference between a policy and an attitude, and the FGA vs. young person relationship, which is also very real, at least in the Homes I've lived in. I can definitely learn a lot from it myself. I consider this GN a handbook on how to handle young people, and will study it more and hope to come back to it when things come up in our Home.

I also absolutely loved the last part of the GN—the stirring talk from Jesus and the commitment part. I've read it a few times already and quoted it aloud about three times to make sure that it really sinks in and that I really do it by His grace. It's great to be on the wagon of all the new moves with the keys to the Kingdom and with you!

A rant, really!

Posted by Nemo

The thing that irks me about the people who are continually complaining about how Family music isn't as "good" as System music is the fact that they don't seem to understand how commercial the music industry is.

Music is an art form, NOT a science. Unfortunately, because of the money that is involved with creating music in the System, artists can no longer properly express themselves for fear that their music won't sell. So the record industry does

research to see what the trends are and what kind of music will "go." They hire psychologists and human behavior experts to create their music so that it will tickle your ears, and you in return will give them money. They call these musicians "artists," but they are more like lab rats, who the music industry uses and then trashes when their "music" isn't in anymore.

Call me unsophisticated, but I'd rather listen to some old black dude sitting on the corner of the sidewalk beating on a tin can and singing the blues than the synthetic cosmetic pre-fab trash that's popular these days.

Creating things that will look good and taste good and sound good is a science! I'm sorry, but when it comes down to it, a lot of these things you don't have any choice in. It's like when you watch a scary movie, the directors study how humans react, and then create the movie to play with your head. Just like the movie director knows that at a certain part of the scary movie you're going to jump out of your skin, the music director knows how to invoke other emotions, which will cause you to enjoy that music. Then there are the music videos—sound is not enough to keep the audience captured any longer, so they throw in video, which is even easier to manipulate you with. I mean, do you think Britney would be anywhere if we didn't see her on TV? Every "good" song has an equally "good" music video.

Like I said earlier, music is a form of expression, like poetry or art. The artist is using the music as a vehicle to transport their feelings, just like the artist uses the canvas to put his thoughts into something visible that you can see and understand. That's nothing new, we've heard it all of our lives.

I am sick and tired of hearing what some psychoanalyst thinks will turn me

on. I'm sick of listening to Pan's tunes that are designed to lull me to sleep and spiritual destruction. I want to listen to revolutionary music. Gimme the tunes of the Spirit! I don't care if it's rap, techno or rock. I don't care if it's just you on your one-stringed guitar singing into a tape recorder. If you're singing from your heart, I'll listen to it.

So, here's to all our dear Family musicians who work so hard to keep the fires of the Revolution burning in our souls. Here's to those who despise Hell's bells and their death call, and open their hearts to receive the music from Above.

You're my heroes!

We want Family music!

By David (15), USA

I totally DON'T agree with "Daniel" that young people in the Family don't like the TCDs, and would rather listen to a constipated baby crying. All of the young people in our Home really enjoy Family music, and I can't imagine what life would be like if we stopped producing TCDs. I listen to the CDs wherever I go. We're always using our car's CD player to listen to the TCDs on our way to go witnessing.

The songs are NOT whack, and most of the songs have modern styles. I think Daniel was very rude and unappreciative to make the comments he did about our talented, gifted, and very anointed Family musicians. Music is a very big part of my life, and many of the songs on various TCDs or Loving Jesus CDs have been what helped me to get out of the battle or gave me the encouragement I needed to keep fighting.

Some of my favorite styles of music are on our CDs, songs like "Don't Give Up," "Who Am I?," "Cry in a Bottle," "Stereotype," "Never Held It Against Me,"

and many, many others. Our sheep really like the Family music as well. The 16-year-old son of one of our sheep has just flipped over our music. He is into guitar stuff and he got copies of our CDs that are full of Vas's great songs.

Hats off to all of our hard-working musicians—Vas, Gavin, Andrew V., Julie Greeneye, Chris, Jeff, Meeky, Joni, Steve M., Esther WW, Hopie, and everyone I forgot to mention. You're doing a cool job, a very special one! We still want the Family CDs.

"We DON'T think like you, Daniel!"

By Shine (of Tim), USA

Reading the GN "The Professionals" was a bit of a shock for us, to say the least. I definitely have some thoughts on quite a few of the subjects mentioned and I want to share them. I also wanted to mention that these are not only *my* opinions but all of the other young people in this Home agree with me and they gave me permission to note that here.

Our Home is a big and busy Home and we are made up of all different people of all different ages, but just out of interest, those of us in Daniel's age category are Sam (24), Lily (22, joined two years ago), Marianne (22), Gloria (21, joined three years ago), Rosita (19), Paloma (18), Steven (17), David (15), Magdalena (14), Michael (13), and me (24, joined five years ago). So when Daniel says that "this is the way that most young people feel," well, he'll have to leave all of us out.

We know people that have left the Family, both young and old. Some of them regret it and some of them don't. We do realize that being a full-time disciple is not for everyone and we understand that.

We are glad that now sheep who don't join can be Active members, and many people, including former members that we know, are very happy about that also.

I think Peter's answer to Daniel's letter was great. It's a funny thing about these times when people write accusations that need to be answered. Every time I (and the others I know) read the answers, like in this Letter or the "Our Side" FSMs, etc., we just love Mama, Peter, WS, and the Family even more and more and more! We are more convinced of being here and more convicted to be the kind of disciples Jesus wants us to be!

About the part where Daniel talks about young people being restricted from having fun. He mentions going out on Saturday night, spending money, going to a club, amongst other ideas of fun. I was kind of surprised at some of this because these are things that many of us who joined the Family were so happy to get away from. Why be in the Family if you want to do what they do in the System? As far as the young people in our Home, we would not want to go to a club for fun. Anyone with even a bit of spiritual depth or discernment who has been to a club or a rave or anything like that can clearly see that most of those places are full of dark and strange spirits. There are lots of drugs, homosexuality, and very strange people. It's like spending an evening in Hell!

This may be a shocker for Daniel and those that think like him, but do you know what the young people in our Home like to do for fun? (And though you may not know them, the young people in our Home are a lot of fun!) Well, we are just thrilled when a new *Heaven's Library* book comes out. It is so difficult to get your hands on it and people would rather read it than do anything! Another thing we really like to do is sit around together and play

guitar, singing Loving Jesus songs together or songs from the new TCDs. We like to write quotes in our quote books, share some of the more interesting prophecies we've gotten, look at the pictures on the MO site, take walks together, and things like that. Those kinds of things are truly fun and we all agree.

We enjoy watching a movie together every week or so, and we thought it was kind of funny that Daniel mentioned the movie ratings, because we are of the opposite opinion. We are very thankful that WS rates the movies, as without them we probably wouldn't get a chance to watch them; there have been many rated movies we have watched that we wouldn't even have rated! We would much rather do something else than watch a movie that has no lessons or is outright contrary to the Word. Daniel and his friends had better be thankful that we are not the team that rates movies! There would be many less movies on the rating list.

As far as music goes, when we read the excerpt of Daniel's letter on the subject, just about everyone at devotions broke out in comments, "What?" "That's crazy!" "What in the world?" etc. You see, we really *do* like Family music, especially the new Loving Jesus CDs and TCDs. While it's true that the older people in our Home and the kids like the music, we young people really *love* it! My husband Tim (FGA) and I have stayed up many a night downloading the new music after it's posted on the MO site (if we haven't gotten it in the mail yet) and when we get a new CD, everyone is ecstatic. We have Active members, sheep, catacombers, and former members (all young people) that love Family music and ask us for it continually. A few of them are actually talented musicians and have System music at their fingertips, but still ask for ours! And

what would we do without new TCDs? We are not going to start listening to System music and many of us have all of the older stuff memorized, so it would be a bit of a bummer to have to just listen to the old stuff over and over.

Just one last thing about the mix of Daniel's comments about the generation gap and FFing: None of us whose names I mentioned above ever have had any experience with FFing, of course, but some of the FGAs in our Home have. We really do respect them and what they have done for the Lord. From some of their experiences in FFing they are able to give us some very wise counsel about living the Law of Love, putting others and the Lord first, etc. And as far as the generation gap goes, well, it seems like some personalities get along better together and some have to work on it more, no matter what age they are. One thing is for sure—when there are any little conflicts between the two generations, it's never all the FGAs' fault or all the young people's fault. We can be pretty self-righteous, LHU. It seems to me that when everyone is trying to follow what the Word says, working to improve their NWOs, and really putting their whole heart into loving each other, we all get along just fine.

So either we are really weird or Daniel's statements were really off. We sure don't agree with him, though, and we are so happy to be in this Family!

Musicians, keep it up!

By Joan (of Chris), Chile

The music you produce is beautiful. I love it! It's "to the glory of God" and it's so powerful! I know it's divinely inspired!

I listened to music all my life as my father was a professional musician/musicologist/teacher and made it his

life's work. (He started at the age of five and you can read about him in the dictionary of music [and/or the Internet] under "Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume"; his name was included years before he died, which is very unusual). The reason I am mentioning my father is because he taught me a lot about music and gave me a foundation in it, as well as teaching me music and violin classes. To me, Family music is some of the most beautiful music in the world! I just love it and would find it hard to live without it. It helps me in my times with Jesus, and in my life in general.

Many songs, styles, and fashions come and go, but ours is here to stay!

"Getting out of the 'grandstands'"

By David, Pakistan

In my 26-year history as a Family member I've had my moments of being critical of the Family. At these times I was unwittingly just trying to justify my own lack of dedication. Although I was thoroughly convinced of my rhetoric, when I finally yielded my heart to the Lord and rededicated myself, my eyes opened and I saw how off the track I was.

Certainly the Family could always use improvement, and not all my arguments were totally unfounded. However, there is something powerful about getting out of the "grandstands" where we spectate while smugly criticizing, and getting on the field as a serious team player. The two perspectives are very different. The serious player can see how much goes into the play and can understand the "flaws" in his team, and is eager to work at it to overcome the obstacles. My prayer is that we will all stop putting down our team, get on with the match, and help each other win.

I was very impressed by King Peter's handling of the letter from Daniel. Though Daniel's criticisms were sharp and unkind at times, Peter did not get ugly but "spoke the truth in love," closing with a convincing call to discipleship. This sets an example to us all to stand fast in the truth, delivering our soul without losing our Christian love and graces.

The nutshell: What it really means to be a disciple

By Tender Joy, Pakistan

Sometimes when hearing about somebody who is extremely critical of the Family, I hardly want to have anything to do with it. Why would I read something that somebody has written who wants to break down, damage, destroy, and hurt something that has been so beautiful, meaningful, and rewarding in my life?—Something that I have given 30 years of my life toward, the best thing that could have happened in my life, and something that I would do again if I could live my life again.

I think that if somebody doesn't like it in the Family for some reason or another, well, they have the choice to leave and do whatever they want to do. Why would they try to excuse themselves for leaving by throwing dirt on the Family? I am sure we have and will continue to make mistakes, but we are trying our best!

It was very interesting to see how lovingly and wisely each critical, "finger-pointing" comment was answered in "The Professionals." I was amazed at and admire how Peter was so patient. It was also a positive surprise to see how many of the younger generation are taking over in leadership positions.

I liked how Peter explained what it

means being a disciple! That's it in a nutshell!

Your music is the best!

By David Willing, South Africa

After reading dead-duck Daniel's useless doctrine, I felt that I should encourage you with this testimony about your music. Recently while visiting a friend who has his own recording studio, we had the opportunity to play him one of the TCDs. After listening to only a few songs he wanted to know where he could buy his own copy! This guy is an excellent musician who records his own Christian music and is knowledgeable about "good" System music. Yet he thought your music was some of the best he had heard! He said the recordings were very good technical quality too!

Keep up the good work; you are the best!

"Are you a professional Christian?"

By L.S. (19), Earth

Dear Daniel,

I know a lot of people who work very hard like your dear friend. If it is true that she worked that hard, God bless her! I admire those kind of people. Right now we're tight on personnel, so we can't fit everything into our schedule. A lot of people in my Home work from the moment they get up (of course, they have Word time) until they go to bed. I admire people like that; they're tops in my book! They're dedicated Family members.

A lot of people have it rough, if that's what you want to call it. Life isn't a bed of roses. My mom is a single mom, she helps VS, has a handicapped son, helps do

outreach with one of the other Homes in our areas, is on the teamwork, etc. Often times she's away or has to come home late. I have to help a lot with my family. It's a sacrifice sometimes and I do have my trials and battles. But I do it 'cause that is what the Lord is asking of me right now. I do it 'cause I love the Lord. I want to please Him. In the Family we all work hard. It's not a place to relax or have vacation.

FGAs are great! It's not like I get along with them all the time and they aren't perfect, but neither are the young people. We need people of both generations. I think even young people can be like legalistic like some FGAs. We all have our problems. No one is perfect.

Why criticize FFing? People often criticize FFing, but their questions have already been answered. I admire the women and men who practiced it. It took a lot of love and they obeyed the Word. I daresay some of us young people don't have enough love to do that. We should admire the FGAs instead of talking negatively about them. They followed the Word and Grandpa 'cause they loved the Lord and had a heart for the sheep. Is it bad to follow the Word? Do YOU?

I've gone through a lot of things, and lately I've been going through one of those "down periods." But I'm sticking it out in the Family no matter what. I've seen lots of my friends leave the Family; it seems like I'm one of the few left. It's not always easy, and I'll be the first to admit that. But I know if I hang on and do my best, the Lord will take care of me and bless me. Even though a person goes through hardships, trials, loneliness battles, has to work hard, etc., if they are a professional Christian, they will stick it out no matter what.—They are willing to do whatever it takes.

Are you a professional Christian?

A look at other organizations

By an FGA male, East

Dear Daniel,

I just want to let you know that I really love you, and I understand that it must be difficult at times for you in the Family. Life has hardly been easy for anyone, as the Lord has designed a set of tests and trials for each of us, to strengthen us and help us to mature. I heartily agree with everything Peter shares in "The Professionals," and pray the Lord will help you to see the true goal of the Family.

I want to say that the SGAs in our area are sweet, on fire, and feel it's their calling to abide by the Charter, so they can reach the sheep with His love. They treat us FGAs as their friends. We talk and share lessons and do activities together. Sure they have people they don't get along with, but that's not only with FGAs; at times it's their own peers or even the younger teens. But isn't it part of life for all of us to learn to relate to people of different ages? In time, we learn how to get along with someone whom we didn't get along with before.

These SGAs all have important responsibilities in their Home or area, such as on the Home teamwork or on the boards; some are even board chairpersons. They express themselves freely, have a link with the Lord, and assert leadership. They enjoy their free days, sometimes inviting us FGAs, their own peers, or even young people younger than them to go with them. And do you know what? Some of them are frustrated that some of us FGAs are not strict enough. Some of them express that they wish we'd stick to the Charter a lot more and not be so lenient. They want to see the Word being lived. They want to thrive on being in the Lord's army.

As for rules, I haven't known any organization or company that doesn't have

rules as guidelines. Even McDonald's has rules for their workers, to guarantee top service for their customers. I heartily agree with Peter—the Family is one of the most lenient churches in the world. I searched in different religions and walks of life before I found the Lord, and I'd like to compare them from my experience and observation with the Family on the area of "adhering to rules or guidelines."

- **In the Family nowadays:**

Open to suggestions from members worldwide, and after much prayer and discussion, that's when a rule is established. Shepherds or parents usually try to explain, explain, explain, remind, and inspire others to keep it. If a rule is broken, the shepherd usually prays and checks to see if there's any reason why, if it's just a blunder of the mind, etc. After all efforts to help, if the offender is consistently breaking the rules, more chiding is given before discipline is carried out. Excommunication is a rare exception and a last resort.

- **In my former Catholic school:**

As soon as you (even if you are a nonbeliever studying there) are caught breaking one of the school rules, big or small, you are punished. On top of that, you are put on their black list and they always keep their eyes on you. If you break the rule again, you are on probation. If you break the rule the third time, you are kicked out of school.

- **With Catholic monks or nuns:**

A vow of chastity is a must, and you can't yield to temptations, or you are just a hopeless sinner. The rules are endless. Nothing worldly is allowed. If a person is found breaking the rules, you are supposed to have confession, and do penance such as saying the rosary as many times as your priest tells you to. If you persist, they'll excommunicate you, leaving you with the

condemnation that you'll go to Hell for sure.

- **With Buddhist or Taoist monks or nuns:**

Just to think of breaking a rule is a sin, really unspiritual, and will harm your immortality. They view a person able to keep all the rules as really cool, as it shows he/she has attained god-ship. The more rules you can keep, and the more good work you can do, the more your immortality will be lengthened. If you break a rule, a chance or two may be given. If the offender persists, he/she will risk discipline or expulsion. Nothing worldly is allowed.

- **In the Red Cross:**

If a rule is broken, some admonition will be given, but if the offender persists, expulsion is expected.

- **In companies or factories:**

If a rule is broken, some admonition is given, but if the offender persists, he/she maybe put on probation, or his/her salaries may be reduced. If there's no improvement on his/her behavior, he/she is fired!

Love comes in many forms. As Dad says, sometimes the hardest form of love to give is discipline. I agree with you—we need to show each other a lot more love. But part of love is safeguarding each other as well, to be "our brother's keeper." That may mean you'll need to stop someone from doing something that may not be good for him or her. I used to feel bad when it came to disciplining my kids, but I knew I needed to, if I wanted to train them right. When they were teens, once I apologized to them for being strict, and guess what they all said? They all said they hadn't felt I was too strict with them.

One of my sons told me that the areas where we as parents were strict with him are now the areas where it's easier for him to make progress and gain victories.

Whereas in areas of his life where we didn't discipline, he finds it difficult to have the spiritual strength and determination to overcome these NWOs. Strictness is like a support, which helped to shape them into confident and successful leaders in the Lord, for which they all express their thankfulness.

"Our music is cool!"

By a junior teen male, Japan

I want to thank all the Family musicians who are trying their best to make good music for the Family. They are doing a great job, I think. I'm a music lover. In light of the GN "The Professionals" where that "Daniel" guy says he thinks Family music sucks, I really disagree!

I think many, many of the Family songs are very good. Some I listen to, and I think, *Whoa! This is cool.* I made MD mixes of the artists I like. Ask pretty much anyone, and they will say they have their Family songs that they really like. Thanks, guys! Keep it up! I'm always waiting for the next CD.

"I love the effect Family music has on me!"

By Zeth, 18, Lithuania

I want to say a big THANK YOU to all the great musicians and to those who make it possible for the musicians to use the gift the Lord has given to them! Thanks to all those little people who are doing the dishes and scrubbing the floors, doing childcare, and all those so-called little things. If it weren't for you little people, there would be no music; and this Family needs its music! Some days I wake up and think to myself: "Now all I need is some good music for all the time I am gonna

spend cleaning and stuff!" Yes, this Family was built on its music, its revolutionary words and tunes and beats—most of all, the words!

It's like this: I like Family music, and nothing else that I have heard does the trick like this Family groove! Now you can imagine my utter surprise upon reading this thing in "The Professionals" about the young people in the Family not liking Family music. I mean, here is someone I have never met before and who has never met me. I don't know anything about him and he doesn't know anything about me, and yet he makes this statement, proclaiming the fact that I dislike the music put out by the Family. Sorry, but Daniel, you're putting words in my mouth, and I don't appreciate that.

In general I enjoy the FTTs. Although there may be some styles or specific titles that don't give me that "thing," that does not mean that I will say that Family music sucks, because it doesn't!

I'm not just speaking out of the blue here. I've listened to plenty of other music, from Metallica and Korn to Jennifer Lopez and Ricky Martin. All kinds of styles—rock, hip hop, pop, techno, dance, soft rock, rap, jazz, and even "Lord of the Dance." I'm not saying that those artists don't have talent. They do have talent, and to be honest, I like some of their rhythm, tunes, and beats. But it's the aftertaste that gets to me. It's like coffee; I like the taste and I enjoy it while I'm drinking it, but as soon as I finish, I've got this aftertaste that I can't stand. I've got to go and brush my teeth or do something that will *replace* that after-influence of the drink.

So here's to all the music that the Family has produced over the last three decades and a little more: Cheers! Please keep it coming!

A small word of appreciation

Posted by Klass

I read “The Professionals” this morning and I wanted to put a little word out to any musicians and producers who read the extremely degrading comment by the anonymous writer.

Your music rocks! I haven’t met each of the producers in the Family, but those I know put every part of their beings into their songs, and I’m sure that goes for all of you. I’m 20 years old and have all the TCDs on my portable MP3 player, which I take with me everywhere I go. Keep them coming. I’m not growing too old for them anytime soon!

“The price you pay for the life you choose!”

By Lily Fighter (27), Nepal

Dearest Mama and Peter,

I’ve finished reading “The Professionals.” Wow, what a Letter! I was shocked and a bit disgusted with the criticisms, but very proud of you for your thorough response. I’m so thankful for the discernment that the Lord gives you and that you see us as individuals, as to be honest, I wouldn’t blame you for being so fed up with young people as to throw in the towel on us all, after reading something like that.

There’s nothing that riles me up more than those young people who claim to speak for “all of us” with such authority. It’s been happening for years, ever since I can remember. I want to say something about how I feel. At the least, it will let you know another angle and another perspective. What I say may be pretty SR—and if it is, please bear with me. But I feel I have a right to stand up for the Family just as

this guy had his right to smear it! It seemed to me that his letter was a clear, point-by-point, deliberate attack on so many things we believe in, so let me answer some of those, as I see them.

I’m an SGA, 27 years old, BAR (born and raised, as we used to say). Having spent most of my life in Europe prior to coming to my present field, I know what it means to lose those you love to the System. It would be almost easier to count those I know of my generation (my age range, within the SGA breakdown) who have stayed than those who have left. It hurt me and it also hurt the adults who were involved. It wasn’t easy for any of us. But to assume that that’s because the Family is wrong is way off!

As far as the scenario of the girl, plus the cases of abuse that he mentions, well, let me just say that many things did happen to us in the Family, as they do to people in the world too. I guess those of us who went on and left them behind don’t usually talk about them, as they don’t bother us anymore. During my teen years I had what would be considered today, totally out of it corporal punishment, a fact that most people who know me today are not aware of. Without the wisdom that later came about as a result of the Tech series, battles that I went through as a teen were interpreted as possession-type stuff. Wrong, yes! But also something that would never happen by today’s standards. But what I never doubted, even then, was that the shepherds in my teen training situation loved me. That was very obvious to me. They did not enjoy punishing me, and they did it because they were a bit misguided and they thought they were helping me. They later apologized. Sincerely.

When I had to face the choice of how to look on those years, I, being a young person who had a hard time in finding the

gray area, decided that rather than make it black and get bitter, I would make it white and accept that the Lord was in control throughout. Later, when older, I think I realized more of what I'm saying now, and was able to "choose the good/eschew the evil," something I did not have the wisdom to do at the time. As I chose not to get bitter, I think that's why the Lord helped me and why I don't have any bad effects or it isn't something I dwell on or usually ever even think about.

Yes, I did encounter some things regarding sex in my childhood, by people both in and out of the Family, which I think is a key point. There were a lot of pretty "free" people back then when it came to sex. (I'm speaking of the late seventies/early eighties.) Again, it's not anything that affects me today. Those people are not around today, nor have I heard of any such current incidents. And even back then, this was not any type of Family policy, but more a few odd characters. Anyone with sense knew that.

My mother was not aware of this till I mentioned it to her in recent years; if I had told her then she certainly would've done something about it. As it didn't happen much at all, I had never bothered to tell her. Yes, it's something that has happened in and out of the Family and we don't deny it. But it doesn't happen anymore. Why does everything wrong that happened in the past have to be the Family's fault?

Currently I live in an isolated pioneer field (I think that Katmandu is as isolated as Timbuktu), where I've been for the past six years. During that whole time, we've been the only Home here. Yes, I've had to sacrifice certain things—companionship, for instance. I could count on one hand the number of people I've been with while being here. I've gone over a year without any sex, at times. Sure it sucks.—But the

fulfillment I have here in my ministry, the knowledge that what we do is unique and counts, and the fact that if we weren't here nobody else would be, is worth far, far more to me than that. Besides, as shocking as this may seem to dear Daniel, I actually find my work for the Lord here to be fun! If I didn't feel that way, you'd better believe I'd be out of here pretty soon.

And yes, I have had my problems with some adults. But it does a great injustice to the many adult friends that I have to hear such negative generalizations being spoken of about *all* adults as absolute fact. I have some very, very dear adult friends who have helped me through a great deal and whose friendship and counsel I still depend on, and without whom I certainly would not still be going on for Jesus. There are some I get along with less than others. (There are also some young people that I get along with less than others.) There are some FGAs that don't treat me the way I'd like to be treated sometimes—like an adult. But they are trying to change, and I think that's the key. It's not malicious, it's more not knowing how to apply the Word.

Speaking of adults only being in charge, other young people and I run my Home just as much as they do.

When it comes to FFing, I feel very sorry for a great deal of our younger generation of young people, of which Daniel must be one. I feel privileged to have been old enough to have seen it firsthand.—My mom was a great FFer. And when the *FF Volume* was still around, I thoroughly read through it (even though I was technically too young to do so, I read it anyway!). And I don't think that anyone who has read what Dad originally wrote or who saw that sample of love in action could ever see it the way Daniel speaks of. I've never heard any such jokes, ever, that he mentioned. But maybe it's our fault too, that we haven't

spoken of it more, and shared how positive it was. When I think of FFing, I often honestly wonder if it's something I'd have been loving and sacrificial enough to do. I hope I would, but I don't know if I'd be like the amazing, brave people that our parents were. It's certainly a sample to strive for. It was a sacrificial ministry and I deeply admire all of those who gave of themselves in this way.

As far as Daniel's comments on the FTTs, I don't even think that needs to be answered.—You, Peter, said that well enough. I feel the same; I like some songs, some are not my preference, but the things that he said are certainly not a “well-proven fact amongst all young people.” I know that some folks still do listen to System music, but I think that the constant flow of new Family music has answered a need for variety, which has prevented people going to the System even more than they do to get it. Plus, it's so feeding and keeps the Word running through our brains and veins.

Man, this guy seems to have completely missed the point that we're here to witness and serve the Lord! For some it seems to be all about having fun nowadays. I, for one, am glad that the Family still has absolutes! I want to have something to live for. I'm not a perfect person either. I did slip several years ago, and only recently did I feel the need to get it off my heart, so I'm having to pay for it. Just to clarify, being on partial is not all misery with no fun whatsoever. I blew it so I have to pay for it; it's no one's fault but mine.

I happen to be in a great Home with people who have made it very easy for me to go through partial. And I know there are some people who think I'm a bit stupid for telling on myself. After all, no one would've known, right? But I do want to be here all the way, 100 percent. If I'm going to live the

life, I don't want to have dark corners in my heart. Sure, it's hard sometimes, and I could say that the isolated situation that I was in “made me do it,” but I could've resisted it, really. I'm happy to have it behind me, and yeah, it's a good deterrent.

There are certain sacrifices we make for our lifestyle, but I believe they're worth it to preserve the Family, which as it is, is worth fighting and dying for! A line from one of the *Godfather* movies has always stuck with me. This young guy wants to take charge of the family business, so Al Pacino's character says he'll give it to him if he gives up the relationship he has with his daughter. The guys face contorts, as obviously he loves the girl. Then Al Pacino says, “That's the price you pay for the life you choose.” And that has always stuck with me. Whenever I've had to do something that I've less than relished, those words come back to me: “The price you pay for the life you choose.” I know this is the life I choose, therefore I'm willing to pay that price. Nobody is forcing me. I choose the life, so I pay the price.

There have been a lot of tests. I haven't passed every one of them with flying colors, but I'm willing to try. I know that “There but for the grace of God go I.” I could be out of here tomorrow if I don't stay close to the Lord, but I'm not planning on it. I want to do my best—which is all I can do. This Family is worth fighting for!

I believe in this Family—I believe it's the truth,

That it's meant to be fought for, something of worth.

I believe what you've taught us, believe how we live,

I Believe that it's worth the sacrifice to give.

Some may see us as weird, maybe a little odd,

But I'd rather be so and be following God. This Family's worth living, dying, and fighting for; We may not be perfect, but we're the best, that's sure!

Seeing beyond the black and white

By Christy E. (18), Thailand

I want to thank King Peter for taking the time to answer this letter and publish it for the benefit of all. In a lot of things Daniel definitely was a bit screwed up with his presentation of scenarios. It was either unrealistic or a bit exaggerated. Yet at the same time there were points brought up that I myself wasn't too clear about either. So it was good to have Peter clarify it, which I'm sure will not only help us young people but also the adults to see things more in the right perspective.

What stood out to me was how Peter was able to explain to Daniel where he was wrong in such a loving manner, giving him the benefit of the doubt. I admire the way Peter responded. I think it was done in love and patience, which gives people the faith to be more open, knowing that they will receive the same mercy that Daniel did.

Seeing my service for the Lord as being a professional in training for the battle encouraged me to hang on and to take my role in the Family more seriously. I could relate to the analogy Peter brought out about the basketball players, being that I love basketball myself. Sometimes it's hard to see yourself much different from the rest of your peers [in the System]; you do the same things they do, yet your lifestyle seems harder, with more restrictions. I think there's a lot of idealistic young people in the Family who don't mind working hard and sacrificing, and the idea of seeing yourself as

a professional missionary makes it easier to live a more disciplined life, realizing that you are living for a worthwhile cause.

Peter's sample of explaining the *Love Charter*, with the emphasis on *love*, is something that will help a lot of people, me included, to guard ourselves from being critically minded and leaning towards the SR side. It's always so easy to see things black and white, but life isn't always black and white. I agree with Peter that there are a lot of gray areas, and in order to decide what the right thing to do is in each situation, we have to use love and fresh counsel from the Lord. How are we ever going to make it in the Last Days if we can't be Spirit-led, but are so stuck to doing things only according to the law?

It's sad what Daniel said about Family music. The Family is progressing in our music and it keeps getting better. I always look forward to the TCDs. I used to listen to a lot of System music when I was in the System, and it has good catchy tunes, I'll admit, but they never spurred me to do anything useful with my life. At least the lyrics on the TCDs are sung and written by like-minded people. The songs can be related to your daily life and inspire you to keep going in the job you have committed yourself to do. I don't think a constipated baby crying could do that.

I know that a lot goes into producing the TCDs, and we really appreciate the hard work the musicians put into it. I'm sure more people will write in, encouraging you guys in the studios to keep up the good work and to not let this guy ruin it for the rest of us who do appreciate your music!

I'll live up to the requirements!

By Gabriel (SGA), Italy

After reading "The Professionals" GN, I was touched by the way you answered Daniel, with such love and firmness. Each

time I read an answer, it sent shivers down my spine. I just couldn't figure myself in your place; after the first few lines I would've exploded. In fact, if you could let this guy know that here, where I am, there are a LOT of SGAs and YAs that *do not* agree with what he says. Personally, I feel insulted by his comments on the Law of Love, Family music, and other such things where he says that most of the young guys think like that. WE DO NOT agree with you, Daniel!

I love the Family and its rules. I love the music we make and want to send a big THANKS to all the musicians and all of you who are behind the scenes. If only I was able to show how I feel towards all the ones who work to make this Family a wonderful Home, I'd just be hugging and kissing and crying and loving you all!

"The Professionals" was very convicting, and I don't mind signing this CM contract and living up to its requirements!

I'll speak for myself, thanks!

By Tami (junior teen), Chennai, India

To be honest, when first reading your letter, Daniel, it had a really bad effect on me. I was in a bad mood, and it only helped to get me lower into my own muddled thoughts and confusion. All I could hear were the gripes so commonly heard and voiced nowadays, and it sounded so intelligent.

Thank you, Peter, for your conviction and your love to answer him even when it seemed so stupid, and we all know that this is not a new topic. When actually thinking about it, Dan, your accusations don't hold water! You had a bad day or a little injustice was done or something and you just had to come out and bum us even more with your tabloid letter. At first glance it sounded so realistic and true that, "Sob! I'm deprived!

Dan says so, so it must be so!" Dan, you're painting the entire picture black and failing to give credit to any of the good things, the fun things, the benefits, the happiness, the advantages to being in the Family!

Do you really think that there'd be a whole 1,700+ young people still around if life was that bad? (And of course, there's all the fun-loving adults, of which there are plenty!) Sure, we have our bad days, bad weeks, bad months, and occasional bad year, but life in the Family is not one all-time bummer. Yeah, there are rules and regulations which I may not like, but that's my Home, not my city, not the Family, hence, why blame it on anyone else?

Dude, you're generalizing the whole lot of us into one sad story. I've had plenty of fun times, but heck, I can't be on a constant high 24-7, and I don't see why I'd want to leave 'cause I can't go to the movies by myself or see my friends thrice a week or don't have a guy friend. I can't have everything. I'm thankful for what I have right now in the situation I'm in, and I'm grateful to my parents for letting me have what fellowship I can, even though it's difficult to work out.

We're working for the Lord. He has rules, tough ones sometimes, but He's paying us (really well!), and we'll keep on obeying Him if we know what's best for us. My family and I have been here for almost forever (so it seems) waiting on the Lord for personnel, and wondering if we'd ever get it. There are seven of us kids and the words, "We're broke" have become commonplace, almost countdown regular these past few months. It's been a trial for me, 'cause God knows I absolutely HATE being so utterly unsure and not knowing if we'd make do through each day or not. But we did, and what's more, He's helped us with so much! We've accomplished things we've always wanted to do but haven't till

now. We're not worthy at all. He's kept us through it all, and now we're seeing the answer to our many prayers.

Life can't be that bad working for such a generous Boss, can it? Well, definitely not for me. I tend to sway to extremes in opinions and moods from one day to the next (LHM!), but today and forever I can definitely say I'm thankful I'm here, and I'd hate to think what would become of us had we been in the System all along. And by the way, I don't know how many "friends" you have, but I for one, as well as every single friend I have, are extremely insulted that you decided (as our "mediator") to state that the Family music produced does not appeal to us. Really, what do you know about us?

It's so "sweet" of you to speak up for us in sum, but I'd rather you shut up or ask those others of your chummy circle before you make such a "well-founded" statement, 'cause you don't know what you're talking about! Yeah, and then maybe you'll sign me off to the young children category.

It's been said before, but I'll say it again, you Family musicians are great! Don't let some guy discourage you from your music for us young people. We appreciate it more than we're willing to admit. I don't get much fellowship, so I was disappointed that the Family chat site got closed, but some of the stuff people were letting out there was extremely pathetic, downright disgusting, and childish—especially coming from "mature" Family teens. It got unpleasant for all because of some, and I hope those people will have grown up when they decide to reopen it again.

The Family is sooo cool! Yes, some of us are lonely, but like a friend told me, it has given me so much more, and I appreciate others, and anyone young the Lord brings around so much more. I've fantasized our city brimming with young people, but the

lack of personnel has helped to bring the few of us here so much closer together to each other and the Lord. We're such good friends. Right now seeing beyond these few advantages is difficult, but when I read in the "Issues" and hear firsthand from my friends, SGAs, and adults that have been serving the Lord faithfully for years, their whole lives, and there's still no one "special" to just grab onto at night, it doesn't seem to be much of a big deal anymore. They've made it, so I can too.

Guys, and the sweet girl who's going through it in that recent "Issues," you're my role models. I thank the Lord for people like you—a constant reminder of faithfulness and obedience.

Better than any cheap high

By Jonathan (19, of Flor), Argentina

It seemed to me that what matters most to Daniel is everything that has to do with "fun," and how he can't have enough "fun" in the Family. I wonder sometimes whatever happened with the idea of discipleship in the Family. It seems all that he can think about is that he can't drink anything he wants, whenever he wants, that there are movie guidelines, and that he can't go out and have sex with whomever he wants outside of the Family.

Reading his letter, the thought that came into my mind is that he's got too much time on his hands. He's got a spoiled attitude. He thinks he should be able to have his cake and eat it too—just because he grew up in the Family, and can enjoy the relative comfort of a Family Home; have all of his needs met; enjoy the Family girls; enjoy the fellowship with other Family young people; partake of the unique materials that we have in the Family for raising our kids, learn practical skills; be able to travel to any part of the world that he wants; basically live the

life that any young person on the planet wants to live—basically do his own thing, without any kind of regimentation, rules, policies, safeguards, standards, guidelines, and/or correction, which are actually there for our own good!

The Family is not too strict. I'm thankful for the rules that have been put into place. They've made the Family what it is today—the ranks for elite DISCIPLES. Imagine what the Family would be like without these rules!

Not only that, but if this is really all that Daniel wants to do, fine, let's say that he has the liberty to do it, but where does he get the time? I live in a Third World country, have a kid, and live in an average-size Home. We're pioneering, and we have many of the same "hardships" that he mentioned when he talked about the "20-year-old girl" in his letter. My wife and I get, on a good day, 15 to 30 minutes of free time (with a half-day of W&R per week), and almost from the time we wake up to the time we go to sleep, we're witnessing, taking care of babies, cooking, cleaning, scrubbing diapers, and there is, of course, the ever-present struggle to keep our room clean. But guess what? In spite of all of these "hardships" and "deprivations," we're happy! Why are we happy? What an interesting question! What is it that makes someone happy in life? What makes you satisfied? Fun? I think not.

I honestly believe that the only happiness to be found is when you find fulfillment in your life, relationship with the Lord, and your interactions with others. Sometimes I ask myself why I even bother on such a tough field, with so few comforts of the west. I'm American, which means that I *could* go to the States if I wanted to, but instead I'm living in cramped quarters, with the political situation in the country only getting worse. What madness

could it be that drives me to stay here in spite of the difficulties? I could answer it in one sentence: You've gotta meet the sheep. Wow! That's it! "The love of Christ constraineth me."

It's interesting, because so many of the situations that were mentioned in Daniel's letter I can relate to, because I've been in a lot of those positions. I actually just recently finished partial, and even though I regret the action that led to my being put on partial, I can't say that I regret the punishment itself. You see, I've always had something of a difficulty reading the Word enough; it has nothing to do with my not being in agreement, but I'm just lazy in that aspect. When I started on my reading list, to begin with, it was more of a chore, but after a while I started getting really into the Letters that I was reading, and I ended up having much more of a hunger for the Word than I'd ever had before! I don't think that I could really say that it was a punishment. It was more of a blessing than anything else.

In the States they have a form of government that is by representation, which means that we elect the people that are going to speak for us in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Generally speaking, you have a [state] politician who goes campaigning all over the state where he wants to get elected. He makes all of his campaign promises, and he listens to the people that he's going to represent. Often he's a very well-known and respected member of the community. I want to take a moment to say that I personally don't know this "Daniel," and that he never asked me if I wanted him to be my representative. I don't agree with his points of view, and it bothers me that he would try to put words in my mouth. I'm very capable of writing, and if I felt that way, I would have said something. I want to exercise my right to speak for MYSELF, without involving

anyone else in my opinions and thoughts.

I do enjoy the FTTs, and I also have a two-month-old baby. He's been constipated on a couple of occasions, and believe it or not, I've actually put on the FTTs so that I *didn't* have to listen to his crying. What a surprise! I would actually prefer listening to them, maybe not everything on them, but then again, if you like *Bush*, and you buy one of their CDs, does that mean that you're going to like all of the songs on them? No way! Sometimes you buy a CD that has 18 tracks because you like ONE of the tracks that it has that made a "hit." Sometimes you like 15 of the tracks, but who's really counting anyway?

It all comes back to our job. It comes back to our motivation. Why are we here? Well, we're supposed to be winning the world. I happen to live in a country that is something of a sensitive field. It's really tough, and every day of living here is some kind of battle. But what makes me want to stay, even though it's rough? Because I see that we have the potential to make disciples out of this nation. That's a rush, that's the high that I'm looking for! What are all of these little cheap thrills anyway?

Music ... well, unless it's got a message that you can feel, it's not really all it's cooked up to be. I've been singing the songs that made the Revolution, and boy, that's something that you can feel in your blood when you sing to people! I'm nothing spectacular or talented, musically speaking, but people are spellbound when they hear this music. Why? It's the Spirit; it's the Spirit! It's better than movies, alcohol, System music, and any other cheap "highs" that you can get here in this decadent, disappointing, depraved, and dying world.

"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. ..." What a

calling! "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." We have the promises in sight! But, hey, the Devil also sees them. He knows what's coming, and he's very good at his job. He's been at it a lot longer than we have, thousands of years longer, in fact, and he's trying to stop us. Are we going to let him? Hell no! Let the dead bury the dead! And if you're dead spiritually, and you just want to live with your little lukewarm, churchy, spew-you-out-of-my-mouth attitudes, and want to live life like you damn well please, go for it! But as for me and my house, we WILL serve the Lord, and we will be DISCIPLES, even if you think that you've got something in your pansy, watery, OLD BOTTLE excuse not to be.

Go be with the has-beens. "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is *fit* for the kingdom of Heaven." Are you fit? Well, maybe I'm not as fit as I could be, but at least I can say that I'm TRYING and that I'm not spending my days whining about what I can't do, what I can't have, and what music I can't listen to. Gimme a break! And you know what, I know some other really nice young people that are SACRIFICING as well. Go figure.

You're worried about not getting to watch whatever movie you want.—WE DON'T EVEN HAVE A TV! Who cares? You know what we do have?—Unity, love, peace, fellowship, sheep, kids, and a whole lot of FUN! We use the new weapons. We have seen the power of the keys WORK! Have you? I've seen miracles! What little puny earthly treasures could compare with that? You want treasures on earth?—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt. ..."

"Choose ye this day, because no man can serve two masters." Whose fool are you?