



**None
of
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Things
Move
Me!**

By Maria and Peter
CM/FM 3307 7/00

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Dear Family,

GOD bless you, dear ones! We love you and appreciate your continued faith and loyalty! We're so proud of you and admire how you stand up for the truth in the face of adversity!

2. You should have received "Stay on the Wall" by now (ML #3303, GN 902), which we pray was a help to you. Recently, attacks on our faith, ranging from distortions of the truth to outright lies, have multiplied; they've spread quite far and wide in some areas through e-mail, Web sites, and word of mouth.

3. We've received letters from some of you who have become discouraged, depressed or confused by the writings of some former members who are bent on attacking, belittling and weakening your faith. The Lord is allowing this, because we know that nothing happens without His express permission. Most of our former members remain favorable, God bless them. We're very sorry for those few who have taken a stand against us, as we wish they could find their satisfaction and fulfillment in helping people and furthering the cause of Christ, rather than investing their time in criticizing or trying to fight and stop those who are. Of course, they don't admit to the fact that that's what they're trying to do. They cloak their true intentions by saying they're venting their frustrations, sharing their views, or giving personal explanations for their own actions, but their goal is to undermine and destroy, if possible, your faith.

4. Not only do they want to cause you to distrust and even hate me and Peter and the Family's doctrines, but they ultimately want you to leave the Family. In circulating all the woeful, doubtful details of why they left the Family as widely as possible, they're hoping many others will join them. They've sent these to Charter Members and Fellow Members alike, and even to other former members, but their target is particularly you young people and those who are new to the Family. That ought to really piss you

off! Excuse the language—and I don't recommend it for everyday use—but this makes me fighting mad, and it should do the same for you!

5. It's pitiful that those who were once close can turn so vehemently against us. Peter and I don't hold any personal grudges against those who disagree with us, and we're not personally up in arms about what's being said about us as individuals, because we know that the same type of things were said of Jesus, His disciples, and of Dad, so we count ourselves in good company. We know you can't please everybody all the time, and as Dad taught us, there's often a pattern when people leave the Family, especially if they have become bitter. So we're not surprised at the antagonism. But what we don't like and won't take lying down is when people deliberately try to divide, weaken and hurt you, our flock, by an outright, calculated attack on your faith in the Word. In ridiculing the Word, they're ridiculing God and you and your beliefs, and we won't stand by while they do that.

6. As Peter and I mentioned in "Stay on the Wall," we don't have time nor has the Lord shown us to get into a tit-for-tat reply to every accusation that has been leveled against us, Dad, the Word, WS, or the Family. That's futile, because as soon as we'd answer today's accusations, misinterpretations or lies, our accusers would concoct another batch tomorrow. However, in this GN we will try to provide you with some general answers and explanations, which we pray will help to settle questions that you may have in relation to all of this, and strengthen your faith.

7. Hearing accounts from those who were once with us but who have chosen another road can often cause confusion, especially when they claim to have the inside scoop or information that you don't know about. The problem is that these disgruntled folks have personal agendas, even though they may claim not to, and so they paint a very distorted picture. They claim their testimonies are the truth, when in fact

they're distortions and embellishments of the truth, with facts and details left out when they don't support their slanted view of things. They misrepresent the truth in a way that causes the reader to believe many things that are untrue—and all for a reason: to make you doubt, disbelieve, and then leave the Lord's service. We hope that our replies will help to answer the questions that you may have on these topics.

Reading Anti-Family Material

8. We strongly suggested in “Stay on the Wall” that you not dignify these former members’ anti-Family diatribes with your attention, as doing so will only distract you and take a toll on you spiritually. As soon as we published “Stay on the Wall” and outspoken former members got ahold of it, they cried, “censorship, control, manipulation,” etc., claiming that we are a cult because Peter and I are trying to keep you from reading “outside information” and “contrary opinions.” We expected that those who are against the Family would come out with this very response to our strong suggestion that you don't take in the lies and perversions of the truth that are in these anti-Family letters and Web site postings that are designed to weaken your faith and destroy your life and service for the Lord.

9. Peter and I don't demand that you not read this material. We're just letting you know that it's not choosing the good and eschewing the evil. It's not going to make you happy, nor is it going to strengthen you spiritually. It will very likely confuse you—and we know where that comes from, since God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

10. There's a lot of garbage in there that we'd like to protect you from for your own peace of mind, and this is our commission as shepherds of the Lord's sheep. But we're not forcing you not to read it; we're just warning you that you'll find it very depressing and full of doubts and deceptions. If you really want to read it, I know there's nothing I can do or say that will stop you.

11. Peter and I aren't trying to keep you under our control, and you know as well as we do that we couldn't even if we wanted to! We

have no way of monitoring all your communications or contacts; nor do we want to. We respect people's personal choices and desires. We do, however, want to help you as much as possible to stay spiritually strong and busy doing the important job the Lord has given us of preaching the Gospel and reaching the world with His message.

12. We're not trying to hide anything from you; our counsel to not read such negative material from those who are no longer with us is because it will cause you spiritual problems. Yes, it holds some truth, but it's only one person's viewpoint with his or her spin on it and their interpretation of past events. It's not the full truth, it brings up things from the past that we've already answered and resolved, and it contains outright lies.

13. I believe that those of you who received such letters and chose not to read them can testify that you did this because you believed in your heart that it was the right thing to do—the best thing for you, not just the best thing for Peter and me! You sensed and believed that it was only going to drag down your spirit and you didn't want to put yourself through that. Good for you! Some might say that's weakness, but to protect your spirit, mind and channel by not submitting yourself to someone's tirade against the Family is showing spiritual strength, conviction, and wisdom.

14. Why go through the ordeal of reading all about someone's bitterness, resentment and spite? In a way, it's a bit like reading a tabloid magazine. People who read those often don't believe half of what they read, but still, it gets them into a gossipy and critical mindset. Of course, reading something that's attempting to tear down your faith is more dangerous spiritually than reading gossip that doesn't relate to you, and you have to go to all the trouble of analyzing it, separating the truths from the lies, and the half-truths from the quarter-truths. Unfortunately, however, sometimes you can't accurately discern between the truth and the lies, as such writings often try to portray themselves as some kind of “inside scoop” on events or details that you're not familiar enough with to judge.

So the writer's hope is that you'll just naively believe it, thinking, "Well, it must be true! Why else would they be saying it?"

15. The Lord has admonished us in the Word that "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, think on these things" (Phil.4:8). And "keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Pro.4:23). Yes, there are negative things in each of us and in life as a whole, but we're not to dwell on them but rather on the Lord. If we let our focus get off balance to where we concentrate on the negative, then it's going to distort our perception of the way things really are.

16. The Word also says to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1Thes. 5:21). You might say that you should then prove for yourself whether there is "good" or worthy material in these letters and Web postings. Well, you could. But since Peter and I and others have gone through them already, we can save you the trouble and tell you that there isn't! So "hold fast" to that which is good. As Paul said, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2Tim.1:13). And as Jesus said, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).

17. Another danger in reading such anti-Family material is that it's human nature to be more inclined to believe the negative than the positive. It's odd, don't you think, how readily people will believe the negative words of someone they've never met and know very little about, rather than the words from Peter and me who they have known for years via the Letters? Here you've been in the Family for years and years, or even all your lives, and obviously you're happy in the Family and want to serve the Lord or you wouldn't still be here. But then you read some letter or e-mail in which a stranger tells you how this, that, and the other is wrong, evil, and pernicious, and you're really shaken by it and feel very confused. I'm not faulting you for that, as I know these writings are demonically persuasive. But why do you think that is?

18. Consider these possible reasons:

1) You live with good, kind people—people you can trust. You enjoy the loving environment of our Homes, and you who have grown up in the Family have known little else. As a result you want to have faith in humanity in general; you believe in people.

2) It's hard to deny a story that someone says actually happened to them. People tend to be quite swayed by these specific examples and stories that bitter antagonistic former members tell. Unbeknownst to the reader, many of those examples and stories are only partly true or not true at all. They're presented with such seeming sincerity, however, that you think, "Surely they wouldn't be lying, not about all those details!"

There are many sides to every situation, and a number of angles from which a story can be recounted. If someone who is unhappy, bitter, and full of grievances is telling you something that happened to them in the Family, then their rendition is probably going to be tainted by their bitterness and grievances. That's just a fact of life. If someone else were to recount the same event, you might be quite surprised at the differences. I'm sure you've experienced this yourself when trying to match up an account of something that happened many years ago with someone else who was also there. Everybody sees things through their own perspective, and depending on what was happening to you at the time, the "color of your glasses" can be incredibly different and you can see things in an entirely different light. In the case of people who are overcome with bitterness, while their rendition of the story might contain some truth, there's probably a lot more truth that, if it were known, would change the picture considerably.

3) People can sometimes tend to be too open-minded or naïve, to the point that they'll believe almost everything they hear.

4) Some people may also feel that they

will be ignorant or uninformed unless they take in as much input as possible from every direction—not bothering to clearly establish their personal value system and refine their discernment skills so that they can determine what “input” is worth taking seriously and what isn’t.

5) Some people see themselves as inquisitive, analytical, or skeptical, and many pride themselves in these traits.

They feel that this attitude protects them, makes them open-minded and keeps them from being taken advantage of. Sadly, though, they’re often only skeptical of the things they’ve been taught all their life, and not skeptical enough of strangers or those who appear kind but have questionable intentions. It’d be much better if people like this would use their skeptical, analytical, questioning minds in a broader sense—that rather than only questioning their beliefs and foundations, they would instead question those who seek to undermine them, and investigate and consider and ponder and get to the bottom of why these people say what they do.

6) Some people haven’t had much close contact with people who aren’t in the Family but know a lot about the Family, and they’re curious as to how those people see us. They know their sheep and friends and contacts, who know about our beliefs and methods to varying degrees, but they don’t personally know many “neutral” or negative people who know a lot about the Family. So when they hear from or meet a former member who was in the Family for many years, their natural instinct is, first of all, to want to trust and believe that person; and secondly to want to know how that person sees things, to get more of an “outside perspective.”

If you want to get the opinion of outside observers, though, why not go to those who just about everyone in the world would consider objective sources—the many academics who have studied the Family? People who have been in the

Family in the past are obviously going to be personally involved and will have personal reasons for saying whatever they say about the Family, whether good or bad. It’s a different story with people who haven’t been in the Family but have studied us. These are for the most part practical, intellectual social scientists who have put the Family under a magnifying glass and analyzed it.

These academics who have studied the Family have, for the most part, heard or read all the bad and lies that have been published about us. It’s not that we’ve sheltered them and given them a candy-coated version of the truth. They’ve read all the bad there is, have waded through court documents and testimonies of former members, many of them have read all the lit that has been used against us, and many of them have read a great number of our publications. They’ve based their conclusions on a well-rounded picture and have by no means been sheltered from the lies and accusations that are leveled against us.

Their basic conclusions are that, while our current beliefs and lifestyle are definitely a bit unusual, even odd, they aren’t harmful to anyone; that we should have the right to live and believe as we like, and that by doing so we in fact positively contribute to society. (See the article on page 46, “Scholarly Studies on the Family.”)

7) There’s also a bit of inherent rebelliousness in most of us. That’s the nature of man. What that means is that even if you know the truth and you know something is right, still, you can be tempted to do the opposite or to question it or to try something different, just because you don’t want to submit to authority or obey.

8) Another part of the problem is a familiarity with the Lord and His Word. It’s a wonderful privilege to receive the Lord’s Words, both in print through His appointed prophets and leaders and personally through His voice of prophecy. But sad to

say, many in the Family have become pretty spoiled on both counts. We had Dad giving the Lord's Word, vision, and revelations to us for 25 years, and now we've had an abundance of prophecy and direction given to us on a multitude of subjects. If you don't stay on guard and in the fear of the Lord, you can lose your respect for the Word and grow familiar with it.

How does this play into the question of believing the words of man over the Lord's Words? Well, since we are human and often more carnally minded than spiritually minded, it's easier to receive the words of a fellow human who we can see, feel, and audibly hear, than it is to believe and receive the Lord's Words, which we have to take by faith. When someone is expressing their views or their version of "what really happened," you're reliving the drama of it with them, sometimes in great detail. It can be pretty persuasive, and people tend to swallow whatever another person tells them hook, line, and sinker, especially if they add details that make it appear that they recall every conversation and circumstance and use the added weight of the phrase, "I was there!"

Face the Light!

19. "But why," you may ask, "would hearing or reading such things have such a detrimental effect on my faith if they're really and truly lies?" Dad answered this question many years ago in the Letter "The Crystal Pyramid" (ML #214). The answer is a spiritual principle that is not easily understood by the carnal mind. When you read such material you undergo a spiritual change, you enter a spiritual battle, so the only way to understand its danger is to see things from a spiritual point of view.

20. Let's look at "The Crystal Pyramid" and the illustration that Dad gave us. The Lord and His Word, truth, and voice of prophecy represent the light—the pulsating light that gives us all the wonderful benefits that we have when we live and obey the Lord's Word. Conversely, the darkness is the Enemy's power, and he tries

to lure people into the darkness through doubts, lies, and any other tactic he can muster.

21. The main point brought out in that Letter was the need for the crystals—which symbolize us—to keep our faces turned toward the light, in order for the darkness to have no hold or power over us. The Letter says:

22. It's strange! As long as the crystals face the Light and the Pillar, they seem to absorb the Light, and they have strength and they glow brightly and are drawn toward it, and the Darkness has no power over them! But if they turn their facets or faces away from the Pillar, it is like a polarization! The changed position in relation to the Pillar seems to shut off some of the Light, and the Light grows dim as the crystal turns away!

23. If it turns toward the Darkness rather than the Light, the crystal loses its brilliance, and it's as though the Darkness closes in and has greater power! As the light diminishes in the crystal, the Darkness has more power to slow it down from being drawn into the Pillar—even to be drawn away! The darker the crystal is, the more it is drawn by the Darkness, as it faces the Darkness! The moment it turns its face towards the Light, it immediately begins to glow with the great brilliance of the Light and Power, and is immediately drawn toward the Pillar, and the Darkness has no power over it!

24. You must face the Light! You dare not turn away from the Light or look backward, or you seem to lose the Light! It seems like only your face is able to absorb the Light. The crystal has to face the Light in order to glow itself, and to shine with such beauty, and especially the Power in that Light that drives off the Darkness!

25. But if the crystal turns away from the Light, as though it were trying to turn itself and fight the Darkness in its own strength, it loses the Light, and it has no Power unless it focuses itself on the Pillar and receives that beam of Light! Every time

it turns away it grows darker, and its strength fades and wanes, as the Light is diminished in trying to face the Darkness instead of facing the Light! (ML #214:45–48)

26. (Mama:) When you keep your face—your crystal—facing the light, then you’re pulled in closer and you see things as the Lord sees them. You’re able to receive the Lord’s Words, His truth, and you’re fed and grow thereby. But if you begin to listen to the Enemy, whether outright or when he cleverly packages his message in the deceptive covering of a friend telling you about some of his bad experiences, sharing his reasoning with you, or complaining about his gripes, and tearing down the Word or Family leadership, then your face begins to turn toward the darkness. And as Dad brought out, when a crystal turns even a bit toward the darkness, then the darkness has some power over it, and you can be pulled further and further into the darkness.

27. If you’ve wondered why some seemingly very strong people have left the Family after hearing such accounts from former members, that’s one reason why. They allowed themselves to turn their faces away from the light, and consequently the darkness had more power over them. Every time a person turns away, they lose strength and power, until finally they lose the glow from the light and don’t shine with its beauty anymore.

28. Sad to say, this is what has happened to many people who were once part of us, who once pulsated with the light and were very much in unity and agreement with the Lord’s Words and the way He led us, but now see things very differently. Why? Because they’ve removed their face from the light and have changed their position. So they don’t see the glow, the beauty, and the blessings and power of the light as they used to before.

29. When rebutting former members’ comments about their doubts, grievances, bitterness, stories about failed or false prophecy, accounts of bad things that Family leadership has done, etc., I’m not saying that every single thing that a former member tells you is a complete lie.

In some cases former members had negative things happen to them, and we are sorry for these things and have apologized in print numerous times. However, in many other cases, when the person telling the story is trying to make the Family sound bad, they will tell you the story in a way that brings out as much negative as possible without telling you the full truth of the situation. If they told you the full story, most likely you would get a very different, more positive or balanced picture. However, they don’t want that, as they’re trying to convince you that they were treated so badly, or that the Family is so terrible.

Is the Family God’s Will for You?

30. Peter and I will set the record straight in these GNs. That is our responsibility as your shepherds, one which we gladly accept. What you must realize, however, is that we can only do so much. We can tell you the truth, we can point you to Jesus, give you His answers, show you the other side, and explain needed spiritual principles, but we can’t make up your mind for you.

31. You must determine what you personally believe and have the faith for and faith in. There are those who want to discredit Dad, me, Peter, the Word and the Family. Where do you stand? What are you going to believe—man’s word or God’s Word?

32. This isn’t hype or coercion or spiritual abuse. Nor do I have to defend my position or our doctrines as if I’m on trial for wrongdoing. I’m not perfect. I’m only human, and I make mistakes too. But I have full faith that the direction Peter and I are leading the Family is the Lord’s will. I believe that what we publish in the GNs is the Lord’s Word for today.

33. If you step back and think about it, you’ll see that what is going on is a debate regarding religious beliefs. Peter and I and those who choose to be in the Family have certain beliefs, as articulated in the Letters. There are those who despise and detest those beliefs and are trying to convince you that they’re false, wrong or unchristian. This is a matter of religion. Why should it surprise us that there are

those who disagree with much of what makes the Family different—Dad, our sexual freedom under the Law of Love, our hearing from spirits, the “Loving Jesus” revelation, the desire for our children to be full-time disciples of Jesus, and the New Wine? And they consider you a mindless zombie for believing in such things. It’s none of their business what you do in your private life, how you use the gift of prophecy, what kind of personal relationship you have with Jesus, or how you raise your children—as long as they’re not being harmed in any way, which they’re not, as the courts have proven time and time again!

34. It has always been this way. There’s nothing new about this attack. The details are different, but the goal is the same: to try to convince you that the beliefs and practices of the Family are ungodly, with the hope that you’ll leave, and to justify to themselves and others why they left.

35. Now I ask you a simple question: Do you believe that being in the Family is God’s will for you? That really is the crucial question. Do you believe you’re in God’s will or not?

36. If you believe you’re in God’s will, which I’m sure most of you do believe or you wouldn’t be in the Family, then you have to choose who you’re going to let influence your mind, heart, and spirit. If you don’t believe you’re in God’s will, then you should go elsewhere. But whatever you do, you should do it wholeheartedly; don’t be double-minded, allowing yourself to be blown about by every opposing opinion that comes along. Don’t be like some who say, “Well, I like the Family, but I don’t agree with some of our doctrines. I like what we accomplish, but I don’t like the way Mama and Peter run things, etc.” If you have serious doubts and disagreements, you’re going to have to come to grips with them sooner or later and be either all the way in or all the way out.

37. You can’t stay sitting on the wall for very long. If you want to stay, we want you to stay, but please stay with all your heart. If you want to go and you have big questions about the Family or about us that you can’t get reconciled by what we or the Lord or your shepherds say to you, or even by hearing from the Lord

yourself, then please go. You’re not going to be happy staying and you’re not going to be able to accomplish much for the Lord in that double-minded state, because as the Word says, “Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord” (Jam.1:7).

38. Peter and I have no desire whatsoever to try to persuade anyone to stay in the Family if he or she is not personally convinced that this is God’s will. We invite you to leave; in fact, we ask you to leave. And in saying this, I’m not heaping on you any of that so-called “intense manipulative spiritual control” by means of guilt or condemnation, as some have accused me of. I want each of you to find what will make you happy and where you will be most fruitful for the Lord, according to your own faith. The Family is not for everyone.

39. Now, as we put the ball in your court to decide what you’re going to believe, please don’t let the Enemy convince you that just because you’re a bit destabilized by this attack, the Family is no longer the place for you. The Enemy is hitting hard, and it’s natural that you could feel a little shaken or be hit with questions or even doubts that you never had before. But if you truly want to believe, the Lord can help you to overcome—He’s done it many times before! So don’t be scared by the Enemy’s boo! If you’re being hit, it doesn’t mean that you’re a doubter; it means that the Enemy’s trying to get you to quit! Don’t let this attack of the Enemy frighten you out of your place of service and your crown! Hold on! Fight back! Read this GN with an open mind and heart, and any questions which aren’t answered in the GN, ask the Lord about them. Do your part to hang on; the storm will eventually pass, and you’ll be stronger for it.

40. Please, as you read this GN, seriously reflect on your own personal conviction and beliefs. Because I don’t want you to suffer such unhappy and unfruitful double-mindedness as some apparently have. That’s sad and unnecessary. As I have said many times, there are many other ways to serve the Lord, and you don’t have to be in the Family to win souls. I personally feel the Family is the best place to not only serve the Lord but also to prepare spiritually for

the future. But my faith is not enough for you. You must decide yourself what you believe and where you stand.

This Is Spiritual Warfare And the Enemy Is Fighting You Personally!

41. Having said all that, I also want to point out another side of the picture which is crucial that you understand. Each of you is being tested. These attacks on your faith are part of the spiritual warfare. Because the Enemy is fighting you personally, please pray desperately before you give up your place of service in the Family, making sure you're fully persuaded in your own heart and that you're not just following someone else's negative, bitter assessment of your faith, religious beliefs, and Peter's and my leadership.

42. Some people get a little resentful or upset when problems are explained in spiritual terms. I understand that some accuse me of explaining away any confrontations or accusations or persecution as "attacks of the Enemy" or "the Lord purging the Family." Some don't see the reality of the situation, and therefore think that's my little defense mechanism. I can understand that you might feel that way, because "the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit" (1Cor.2:14).

43. But the truth is, we are fighting a spiritual warfare and the Enemy is attacking. He always has! Don't just take my word for it—read your Bible! He's fighting you, me, Peter, and the Family as a whole with everything he's got! It's real! To truly discern what's happening, you have to rise above the finite, narrow mind of man and see with the eyes of the spirit. Consider the following verses from the Bible, which you know so well. Ask the Lord to help you look at them in a fresh light, applying them to your present situation:

Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and

every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2Cor.10:3–5).

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph.6:12).

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1Pet. 5:8).

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices (2Cor.2:11).

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not (Luke 22:31–32).

44. Acceptance of the existence of a spiritual warfare is crucial to understanding what's going on and to gaining the faith and strength you need to make wise decisions. As Dad has taught us, when you go over the top, that's when the Enemy starts shooting. We must be doing something right to have these attacks come up now. There's a reason why he's fighting so hard, which the Lord explains in this next message.

Each of You Will Be Tested

45. (Jesus speaking:) The fact that you've entered the era of action means that the action has been upped in every area—including the area of the Enemy's attacks against you. This is destined to be, in many ways, the greatest era since the beginning of the world, because it will be the era of the greatest witness this world has known so far. It will be the era when many are brought to a decision, when there is potential for My Word to go out like never before. The Enemy knows that and is furious, and he is do-

ing all he can to keep My children from entering in with their whole hearts. This attack on your faith is but one of his attacks.

46. This era is destined to be great. This is the era that many prophets and righteous men desired to see and participate in. They see the potential that exists for getting out the Word and My message in these days before the final showdown. They know how important it is that people receive the Word so that they are qualified to make their decisions later. They know how important this era is—that, in fact, the final Endtime events cannot come about until this era has been played out. So of course they all want to participate! They see the potential for these days, and they know that this could be the era of the greatest witness ever. It stands to reason that for such a great honor as participating in this era of action there would be some price attached. And so there is. You, My children of David, have all been through testings and purgings over the last few years. You’ve been tried in many areas. There have been hurdles to leap, strong meat to swallow, calls to obey in areas that are difficult. You have each personally crossed the Jordan, and those of you who are still here have a more intimate relationship with Me than before.

47. You might feel that after all that, you deserve to enter in; there should be no question about it. That’s because you don’t comprehend how great this era will be, how far-reaching the effects of your personal actions and decisions during this crucial time will be. This is a crucial part of the culmination of world history as you know it. This era will be the last chance for many to receive the full message, the meat of the Word, in these days when you can spread it abroad relatively easily. This is the chance for many to know the truth, to make the right decisions, to receive Me without having seen Me. This is such an important time—you have no idea!

48. The Enemy is furious, as I said before. He’s fighting very hard, and I will allow each of you to be tested. These tests will not be easy. This challenge to your faith is one of those tests. Those of you who have heard or read the

thoughts of some of your former members can testify to their persuasiveness. But in My eyes, it is no more than one of the carefully masterminded attacks that the Enemy is throwing at My green beret troops.

49. It’s field-testing time, to see what you’ll do with the new weapons that you’ve learned to use, to see what you’ll do under extreme circumstances, because the days to come will be full of them. This will not be the last test, or the only one. Be prepared, My children, and be ready to fight for your place—because it’s a place of great honor, with guaranteed victory. It is not given for free. There is a price to be paid. If you’re willing to pay it, congratulations! You will participate in a spectacular show of My anointing, power and strength—which will be given freely in order to complete this stage of world history. These are the days all the prophets have dreamed of! (*End of message from Jesus.*)

50. (Mama:) To review the main points covered so far:

- This is an attack on your religious freedom. People who despise and detest your beliefs and lifestyle are trying to convince you that they’re false, wrong or unchristian, with the ultimate hope that you’ll leave the Family.
- This attack is aimed largely at you young people.
 - The same things were said of Dad and similar things were said of Jesus.
 - There are those who disagree with much of what makes the Family different—Dad, our sexual freedom under the Law of Love, our hearing from spirits, the “Loving Jesus” revelation, the desire for our children to be full-time disciples of Jesus, and the New Wine.
 - You must determine what you personally believe and have the faith for. Will you believe man’s word or God’s?
 - Do you personally believe it’s God’s will for you to be in the Family?
 - You’re free to leave at any time. I want each of you to find what will make you happy and where you will be most fruitful for the Lord, according to your own faith.

• Peter and I do not demand that you not read the writings of former members. That is your choice, one which I hope you would ask the Lord about. Remember the spiritual principle from “Crystal Pyramid”: You must keep your face turned toward the light to absorb the light. If you turn your face toward the darkness, the negativity, then you start losing the light and the power and strength you need.

• It’s much easier to believe the negative than the positive.

• There are many places to serve the Lord. If you don’t believe the Letters or have faith in our fundamental doctrines, then you would do well to go somewhere else rather than continuing to live a life you consider a lie.

• We are engaged in spiritual warfare and the Enemy is fighting you personally.

• Each person will be tested before being given the anointing to fully participate in the era of action and partake of all the promises it holds, but the rewards will be well worth the fight!

Dad’s Death and Departing Family Members

51. There is another point I want you to be aware of before we move on to answer some of the accusations that have been made against us.

52. It’s been almost six years since Dad went to be with the Lord. While there has been a great deal of progress made during these past six years, they haven’t been easy years. Dad was the founder of our religious movement. He was our earthly shepherd for 25 years. We were all used to his style of leadership and we were comfortable with the way he talked to us through the Letters.

53. All of a sudden one day, things changed. Dad was called Home to Heaven and the reins of the Family were given to me. Although this wasn’t a surprise, as Dad had made it clear throughout the years that I would be his successor, and the transition was a natural one in that I had already been writing Letters to the Family in the years before Dad’s Homegoing, it was still a change in many ways: My style of leadership is somewhat different; the GNs include more prophecy; the Lord started moving

the Family in new ways, and He gave us some new revelations and amplified some of those given to Dad in the past. Within just a few months of Dad’s Homegoing, the Charter was released. All of this, when added together, has been an immense amount of change for us, as it would be for any religious movement.

54. Sociologists who study religious movements know that upon the death of the founder there are often difficulties within the movement. Often what happens is that there are leadership struggles which weaken it. Sometimes those struggles lead to splinter groups forming as a result of people near the top feeling jealous or insecure, or feeling they no longer have the same standing with the new leader as they did with the old. Some have difficulty with the new direction the new leader is steering the movement in. Some just liked it the way it was and want it to continue that way, and when it doesn’t, they become discontent. Sometimes they try to cause trouble and sometimes they leave; sometimes they do both.

55. We’ve had our share of people leave the Family since Dad’s passing. Some have been leaders or old-time Family members. Thankfully, for the most part these folks have moved on with their new lives.

56. A few of those who have left have become vocal against Peter and me. This is to be expected. The history of religious movements is full of examples of this happening when the founding leader dies. We’re just thankful that the Lord and Dad prepared the Family for years for Dad’s death and the passing of the torch to me. You, the Family, are very resilient, and this combination made for a smooth transition between Dad’s leadership and mine.

57. But it should not surprise you that some of those who were either leaders or who worked with or near leadership would begin to speak disparagingly against Peter and me, the new leadership. It’s predictable; it has happened time and again throughout history. When you hear of these people speaking in such a manner, you should try to remember that this is not unusual, but something that has happened to many of those who lead religious movements after the

death of the founder.

58. Several sociologists of religion have conducted studies of those who leave religious movements. These sociologists have pointed out that there are numerous reasons people choose to leave a religious group. The majority move on with their lives, adjust to life outside of the group, and in time adjust their belief system accordingly. These people have an outlook on their time in the movement ranging from remembering it as a happy time to a somewhat troubled time which they have moved on from.

59. There are some, however, who after some time, for various reasons, begin to see their time in the movement as extremely negative. This seems to occur more often when they hook up with someone negative or someone's writings that are negative about the movement, including those involved in the "anti-cult movement."

60. When this happens, the person who previously strongly adhered to the beliefs of the movement now begins to see it all as evil. Virtually all of their past involvement is now seen as destructive; those that they used to love, they now hate. They basically have nothing but bad to say about the group, its doctrines, and especially its leadership.

61. Much has been written by some foremost sociologists of religion regarding this state, referring to such former members as "apostates." Although the sociologists will accept that there is some truth to what the apostate says, studies have indicated that much of it is also slanted or distorted by their negative outlook and attitude, and therefore cannot be taken simply at face value.

62. I'm telling you this because you're sometimes faced with listening to or reading material from people who would be considered "apostates." You should take this information into consideration when deciding whether to believe their testimony.

64. ACCUSATION: It took Maria and Peter years to admit the obvious; sexual abuse of minors had occurred in the Family, MO was directly responsible for it, and that it is a sin in the eyes of God. Neither MO, Maria, nor Peter were ever truly sorry for advocating that adults have sexual contact with minors. They were terribly sorry, however, that after years the court forced them to publicly admit that MO was wrong, and responsible for the harm that children had suffered.

65. (Mama:) It is sad that issues that have been resolved for years are once again brought up, but because they have been, I will address them once again. Before doing so, I want to point out that the claim that Peter and I are not sorry for any hurt that happened to individuals in the Family is absolutely false. We are very sorry that anyone was hurt, and have publicly apologized and have asked for forgiveness in various Letters or other publications. (*See the 1992 Statement on Child Abuse; "Our Beliefs Concerning the Lord's Law of Love," ML #2858:50-51, published in 6/93; "An Answer to Him That Asketh Us," ML #3016:18-20, 52-56, published in 9/95; Mama's Letter to Former Members in "Bridging the Gap," ML #3068:101-108, published in 8/96; "An Open Letter to All Current and Former Family Members," ML #3091:3,10h,15-22, published in 12/96.*)

66. If some choose not to believe or accept our apology, that is their prerogative, but God knows our hearts. We are sorry about anyone who has been hurt in any way during their time in the Family. Not only are we sorry, but we have established firm rules regarding sexual contact between adults and minors, making it an excommunicable offense in 1986. We have also included clear rules and punishment in the Charter to ensure that no harm of any kind related to sexual or physical abuse happens, and if it does, that those who caused it can be disciplined. Our apologies were not only words, but actions which have significantly changed the governance of the Family.

67. Some are going to great lengths to try

Accusations and Answers

63. Now let's go on to some of the accusations you might have heard or read.

to convince you that it was the intention of Dad, Peter and me to deliberately hurt young people, and that we were maliciously promoting child abuse and deceiving people. I'm saddened that this subject has come up again, for several reasons:

68. ○ You who have read certain writings from former members have had to wade through an interpretation of events and our doctrine that is confusing, depressing, and wrong. While there is some truth to it, there is a definite "spin" put on it, and the conclusions, insinuations, and second guesses of our motives and reasoning are not true.

69. ○ It's a shame that we are once again dragged into the past and forced to rebut accusations that have long been resolved and apologized for. There are people who are not content that testimony has been given in courts of law in numerous countries around the world, and that in every case the Family has been victorious. Some of our victories were appealed, yet the appeals were thrown out by higher courts. In a number of cases, the Supreme Court of the country passed judgment in our favor. In the case in England, a High Court judge ruled that the Family was a safe place for children.

70. Unfortunately, some people seem driven to become a type of vigilante in search of their own interpretation of "justice." They don't seem to place much credence in the fact that in every single case, the judicial systems of numerous countries have all concluded the same thing—that the Family is a safe place.

71. When all is said and done, no matter what claims these detractors may make, the truth is still the truth: Major changes have been made in the Family. Any hurt that was caused to young people in the past will not be repeated, and mechanisms are in place to ensure that it isn't. No children have been taken permanently from the Family in the various large-scale persecutions we have faced. And after a very long and drawn-out custody case, the High Court in England judged the Family a safe place and awarded the care of the child to the mother in the Family.

72. Some of our detractors say that Peter's letter to the judge published in "An Answer to

Him That Asketh Us" (ML #3016, Lifelines 22) was a frantic whitewash attempt to get the judge off our backs. That is not true. The message in this GN represents what the Lord showed Peter and me after a great deal of prayer and counsel over many months. We were sincere about what we wrote, we stand by it today, and Family policy reflects this stance.

73. It seems that many Family members do not understand the explanations in this GN. Maybe you didn't realize that it has an important message that is for the Family as well as for the judge to whom it was written. If you don't have a clear understanding of these matters, we suggest you study this GN carefully.

74. A review: The judge in the British case stated that in order for him to award the care of the child to the mother, he needed assurances from WS that would ensure the safety of the child. In short, those included:

- > changes in the Family child discipline rules for children in the United Kingdom,
- > points regarding the education of our children,
- > continued openness and contact with relatives,
- > to acknowledge that because of Dad's writings, he was responsible for some children in the Family in the past being subjected to sexually inappropriate behavior, and that he was therefore wrong to write such things.

75. In "An Answer to Him That Asketh Us" I stated: "With 20/20 hindsight we can look back and see that it would have been better to explain things more clearly. We should have anticipated potential problems and put in more stringent rules to keep them from happening, including prohibitions on all adult/minor sexual contact. By not having such restrictions in place, some people were able to act in ways that were harmful to others.

76. "Because of the insight Dad gave into the Scriptures which granted us a great deal of sexual freedom, without clearly stated explicit restrictions that prohibited all sexual activity between adults and minors, it resulted in actions that caused harm to some children. He must therefore bear responsibility for the harm.

Today it's easy to see that it was wrong not to put explicit restrictions in place earlier, but Dad didn't see the need for such explicit rules when he first introduced sexual freedoms" (ML #3016:16-17).

77. Dad himself apologized from the spirit world, admitting that he did hurt others at times by his words and actions. He now knows and acknowledges that he was wrong to have introduced the Law of Love without clear boundaries prohibiting sexual contact between adults and minors. I'm sure there are those who despise and reject his after-death apology, but what else do you expect? He had gone to be with the Lord when I wrote this GN and Peter wrote his letter to the judge. For those who believe in Dad's ability to speak from beyond, you know that this was his sincere request for forgiveness.

78. Some vehemently criticize me for what they say is careless, blind protection of Dad and an unwillingness to admit he was wrong. While I don't believe the general principles of the Law of Love as the Lord revealed them to Dad are wrong, I have stated clearly in the above-mentioned GN that Dad was wrong to not clearly state explicit restrictions that prohibited all sexual activity between adults and minors from the beginning. Now we know. We are much wiser today than yesterday.

79. What I'm saying here is not new. We published this Letter five years ago, and for the most part, people accepted what I wrote, including my and Peter's apologies. Some would want you to think this was done in some nefarious way and that we did not mean what we said. This is not the case. We meant every word of it. We clearly stated all of this in 1995 and are just repeating this to show how ludicrous such accusations are.

80. Let's remember that 14 years ago, in 1986, Dad and I banned all sexual activity between adults and minors. This was years before the Family was involved in large court cases, and therefore it cannot be said that we made this ban under pressure from the courts or the System. In 1988, again years before any court cases, sex with a minor became an excommunicable offense, and it very explicitly remains so in the Charter.

81. In 1988 we published the "Child Abuse?!" tract in which Dad made the definitive statement, "We do not approve of sex with minors, and hereby renounce any writings of anyone in our Family which may seem to do so! We absolutely forbid it!" This clearly showed Dad's stance regarding the matter.

82. Later, in the Letter "An Answer to Him That Asketh Us," we used the definitions of the words in that sentence in order to further clarify our position, so that it read: "We do not consider it right or good, we do not think or speak favorably of, nor do we officially [or unofficially] consent to, confirm or sanction sex with minors. As a result of this fact, I reject, disown, abandon and give up by open profession every single writing of any person in the Family which may appear to approve of it. Without condition or limitation, we command the Family not to indulge in sex with minors" (ML #3016:26).

83. In that same statement of 1988 Dad renounced all literature, including his own, that indicated in any way that sexual activity with minors was permissible. Based on his renunciation of such Family literature, he approved our lit purges, which expunged all such literature, no matter who it was written by, including his own. Dad didn't just renounce his old writings; he had them destroyed.

84. The Letter "Child Abuse: A Final Warning" was published in 1989, a few months after the 1988 Child Abuse statement came out. In it, we stated: "We've already put out an urgent notice to the Family and to the whole world that we don't do such things, and we mean it, we don't do it!—And anybody who does is in serious trouble, not only with the world but with us!" (ML #2536:10).

85. Also in 1989 the Letter "D.O. Is for DOers of the Word!" (ML #2531) was published, in which Dad listed the excommunicable offenses, including the following:

14. Sex with Minors

We do not advocate nor practice sex between adults and minors (someone who is under-age)..Any such practice is strictly

forbidden within our group and anyone found guilty of such will be automatically and immediately excommunicated—totally severed from receiving any literature or from having any contact with the Family whatsoever. **(Right!—D.)** (LNF 121:10)

86. Here’s an excerpt of LNF 121, which was also sent out in 1989:

10. “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones!”

...We want to reiterate that the “Child Abuse” tract was not only our official statement to the System but also our official statement to any Family members, part-time or otherwise, that any such practice is strictly forbidden within our group, and any-one found guilty of such will be automatically and immediately excommunicated—totally severed from receiving any literature or from having any contact with the Family whatsoever! **(Right!—D.)**

87. In April of 1992, the “Statement on Attitudes, Conduct, Current Beliefs and Teachings Regarding Sex” was published. Here are excerpts from that document:

6. Sexual relationships between adults and teens.

Although the laws in many countries do allow adults to have relationships with teens of legal age, communities in our fellowships strictly disallow it. Our membership has unanimously agreed to respect a total ban within our communities on any and all sexual contact between adults (defined as anyone 21 years of age and over) and anyone under 21 years of age, under penalty of excommunication if not respected. [Note: In the “Offenses Warranting Excommunication” listed in the Charter, there are now specific variations on this rule for those between the ages of 18 and 27.] Teens are also expected to refrain from engaging in any form of sexually enticing activities or behavior specifically aimed at

provoking a sexual response in an adult. Normal warmth and affection may be shown between an adult and a teen, but it may not cross from a social exchange into an overtly sexual expression.

7. Sexual abuse of children.

We are diametrically opposed to any form of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children whatsoever, and all our membership are resolute in their agreement to abide by and support this position under penalty of excommunication from our fellowship. Any and all previous writings, philosophic and theological speculations, or individual opinions of members taken contrary to this position or that in any way could be construed as lending credence, support or justification for any form of sexual touching of children, have been officially categorically renounced and forbidden, and all printed materials deemed objectionable have been ordered by our founder, Father David, to be removed from use and destroyed.

Like all concerned parents, our members believe they must demonstrate or manifest love for their children in physical ways the children can relate to. We believe that showing natural, warm, non-sexual affection to children, such as a rewarding hug, a kiss on the cheek, a clasp of their hand or a pat on the shoulder, is critical to their emotional well-being. Affection that goes beyond that, however, involving any form of obviously sexual touching of children, or any minor, for that matter, is strictly forbidden in all of our communities. We feel assured that our communities are in fact much safer places in regard to these matters than one can find in much of society today.

88. As we became more aware of the intricacies of the court cases we were involved in at that time, it became obvious that we needed a clearer explanation of our official stance on adult/minor sex than the above few paragraphs.

So in 1992 a second, more detailed statement on the subject of child abuse was published, entitled: “Our Replies to Allegations of Child Abuse.”

89. Mounting a legal defense is a very complex, detailed undertaking. Cases are won and lost on choices of minute wording. The laws are very specific, and therefore the explanation of your defense and rights also has to be very specific, as well as presented in the legalese that judges will be judging matters and basing their conclusions on. We had to be very accurate in our choice of wording in our official stance regarding the child abuse charge. It would be considered totally irresponsible in anyone’s book to put forth a defense by using haphazard, unprofessional vocabulary that you think means one thing but which means something entirely different to the judge, or one that was not detailed enough or complete enough to provide a decent defense. Because later, if it dawns on you that something you submitted as evidence is not portraying your views or stance as you intended, you can’t say, “Oh, oops, we didn’t mean that. What we really mean is this....” For that reason, and that reason only, we reissued the second Child Abuse statement in 1992.

90. At the same time those in WS also worked very hard to produce the Position and Policy Statements on many other important topics. I’m sure all the fathers and mothers whose children were returned to them after the false charges of sexual abuse were dismissed are thankful we were prayerful and thorough in the way we handled the charges against the Family.

91. The preceding excerpts of Letters and statements make it obvious that we had definite rules against sexual contact between adults and minors since 1986. As I said in “An Answer to Him That Asketh Us,” we should have had rules in effect much earlier that would have prevented any of our young people from being hurt. We didn’t, and we’re sorry we didn’t because it made it possible for some young people to be hurt. Adult/minor sex has been an excommunicable offense for 12 years. Any sexual crossovers in

the Family are considered sin and they remain an excommunicable offense, which will be disciplined according to the guidelines in the Charter. If you are aware of any type of sexual impropriety, you know what to do—report it! In fact, those who do not report such things are guilty as well and subject to the same discipline.

92. We’ve been accused of flip-flopping in our stance on adult/minor sex. We haven’t. It is clear that 14 years ago, in 1986, Dad and I put a ban on any adult/minor sexual activity. In 1988, 12 years ago, we made it excommunicable and it has remained so since then. We made it quite clear that any such activity was wrong and not allowed within our communities. While the theological discussion may have continued, the fact is that any adult/minor sex was excommunicable. In 1995 the Lord spoke explicitly on the subject. Here is an excerpt from that GN:

(Jesus speaking:) “The bounds that I have set, because I have set them, are the boundaries, and you are to go no further. For to go further is sin, for these are the boundaries that I have set. I have set these boundaries that these things would not be a testimony against you. I have set these boundaries in wisdom and in love.

“As I lead you step by step, so did I lead your Father David step by step. So did he too learn the need for boundaries. And so did he set boundaries for your safekeeping, for your protection. So stay within the boundaries of God and sin not, for he that oversteps the boundaries sins in My sight. For these are the boundaries of God, the boundaries that your David has set forth by the wisdom of God. Remain within the boundaries and you are free. Step without the boundaries and you sin....”

(Mama:) Although the Lord has given us in the Family much freedom, there are, nevertheless, some restrictions. The Lord says clearly here that He, through Dad, has set some boundaries for us. He goes on to say that if we cross over those boundaries, it is sin. What are those boundaries?

The boundaries that Dad put in place concerning sex were:

- 1) No sexual contact between adults and minors.
- 2) No male with male sexual activity.
- 3) No sex with outsiders.
- 4) No sex with new members until after their first six months in the Family.
- 5) Any sexual activity between adults must be done according to the Law of Love.

These rules are all precisely reiterated in the Love Charter.

What the Lord is saying is that if you break these rules, cross these boundaries, you are sinning. He said these boundaries were set up by Him. “The bounds that I have set, because I have set them, are the boundaries, and you are to go no further. For to go further is sin, for these are the boundaries that I have set.”

What is it that gives us faith? The Word, right? “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom.10:17). So if the Word gives you faith for something, like it does for us to have sexual fellowship with other consenting adults, then you can engage in those activities without sin. However, when the Word says that you cannot do something, then you cannot have the faith to do it, because you would be acting in disobedience to God’s Word. So to cross the boundaries the Lord, through His Word, has set up, is sin. (ML #3016:81,82,85–87).

93. As far as we’re concerned, that’s the final word on it. Any questions about whether adult/minor sexual contact is at all possibly permissible in theory or theologically were laid to rest. This overrides anything that was ever written suggesting otherwise. Once the Lord said it was sin, we announced it to the Family and that has been our stance since that time.

94. I want to emphasize this point, because I don’t want any of you thinking that our stance on this issue is ambiguous. The Lord made it clear at the time of “An Answer to Him That Asketh us” that all adult/minor sexual contact

is sin. We consider it as such. It is wrong and results in excommunication.

95. Everyone knows, and numerous courts acknowledge, that solid safeguards have been put into place to protect young people in the Family from abuse, and as such, they are no more likely to suffer abuse than young people in society at large. You who are in the Family know that for 12 years any sexual crossover has been grounds for excommunication; you also know that you need to protect your young people and all young people in the Family from any abusive situation. You know that our official stance is that any form of adult/minor sex is a sin. If you know of any infraction of the Charter rules taking place, it is your duty to report it. This is a resolved point.

96. Our detractors, however, continue to bring it up and try to document supposed wrongdoing on my and Peter’s part. The facts stand. We’ve faced these accusations in many court cases and have won every time. We have admitted and apologized for the past, we have asked forgiveness, we have put strong rules in place, and we have moved on from all of this. My question is, why don’t they?



97. To be involved in a court case costs a lot of money. Thank the Lord He supplied the funds needed, and our lawyers were very generous and did a marvelous work for a very reduced fee, and in some cases the lawyers were provided by the government through legal aid. If there had been a way to end the court cases we were fighting earlier, believe me, we would have done it. Anyone who has been involved in any court case, especially a very complex one with many witnesses, knows that it’s not your call as to how quickly things move along. To insinuate that we deliberately dragged out the court case because we were unwilling to make the statements made in “An Answer to Him That Asketh Us” and we thereby wasted enormous amounts of the Lord’s money is unfounded! The idea that had we written “An Answer to Him That Asketh Us” earlier we could have avoided the whole case and saved loads of money is ridiculously simplistic.

98. We followed the Lord step by step, praying very desperately. And for those who might not remember or who were not intimately involved, we were fighting not only a custody case, but a battle for our right to religious freedom! The BI case, which is mentioned in some recent anti-Family materials, was not the only court case in progress at the time. We were also fighting cases in Spain, Argentina, Australia and France. We were engaged in an intense battle for our future and our children, one that Dad and Peter and I did not by any means take lightly. We remain very thankful to the Lord for the victories He delivered into our hands, though we were often like little David fighting the Goliath of the System. We are eternally thankful to the Lord for the wise decisions of the courts that have allowed us the right to exercise our religious freedom and raise our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.



99. Regarding physical abuse in the form of excessive corporal discipline, extended isolation, etc.: Peter and I are very sorry for the harsh and severe treatment some of you young people received in some Victor programs. Such treatment was wrong, and those who treated you that way were wrong to do so.

100. Peter recently reviewed the pubs that were written in the late '80s and early '90s about the care and training of our JETTs and teens at the time. These consisted of FSMs about the Victor camps, the Techi GN series, and a few other Letters to and about young people, their parents, and the need for the Family to tune in to the young people.

101. The main thrust of these publications was to help the JETTs and teens of that time period get more connected to the Lord and the Family. The FSMs that explained the Victor program emphasized the need for the shepherds to get involved with the young people's lives, working with them, talking with them, teaching and training them. They talked about discipline as well. The discipline that was written about at the beginning of the Victor program seemed appropriate for the situation. There was mention of silence restriction and being isolated from

the other teens and young people; however, it was never meant to be for long periods of time, as we later heard happened in some situations.

102. When addressing silence restriction in "Getting Back on Track, Part 3," I wrote: "A few minutes of silence restriction can be a positive thing if used wisely, especially for younger groups of children who can get so rowdy sometimes that about the only way you can bring order is to have everybody be completely silent for a few moments. Or somewhat longer periods of silence restriction can occasionally be beneficial for JETTs or teens, as long as it's not taken to the extreme" (ML #2892:67).

103. On isolation I wrote, "The use of the word 'isolation' for such a disciplinary method is a bit misleading, because 'isolation' implies that the person is completely alone, as if in solitary confinement. But in actuality, when problem people need to have some time apart from their peers, it is not with the intention that they be separated somewhere completely alone for long periods of time, without the warmth, support and encouragement of others. The whole point of such separation is so that the problem person can have a private time of prayer and reading the Word with the help and counsel of a shepherd or someone who is spiritually strong enough to help pull the person through his problems. Such times of separation can bear good fruit if they're handled lovingly and wisely and not overused" (ML #2892:66).

104. In the same Letter I said:

105. The need for greater shepherding and direction and guidance is not a go-ahead for you adults to resort to an unloving, legalistic, harsh style of shepherding. I don't want to see a backlash now to where you overreact and get overbearing, bossy, legalistic, condescending, demanding, and pushy, and go to the other extreme of harsh discipline, heavy restrictions, etc.

106. Harsh discipline is not the Family way or the Lord's way! Dad and I have never advocated harsh, unloving, merciless, cruel discipline! How very sad if our dear people who have joined a Family of

love only hear about that love in the Letters and do not experience it. How sad if all they see is harshness, legalism, self-righteousness, strict discipline, quenching of the Spirit, dependence on the arm of the flesh, and squelching of personal initiative and forbidding of good suggestions and counsel.

107. Such measures remind me of what Dad said in “Prayer for Love and Mercy” about the nurses who can’t stand to see the pain and suffering, so they harden themselves and let their hearts grow calloused until they become almost butchers of mankind. “Getting hard and tyrannical is a fleshly compensation, it’s not the Lord’s solution!” (See ML #75.)

108. I am not in agreement with isolation or silence restriction when it is practiced in an extreme manner. A few hours in a caravan studying the Word because it is a place to get alone and be quiet could be perfectly okay under certain circumstances. Sometimes there just aren’t any other free, quiet places for someone to go to for quiet time. And in some ways, it should be looked upon as a privilege to be able to get away from the hubbub of activity in a busy Home to have a few uninterrupted hours in a nice quiet caravan to concentrate on the Word.

109. Or in some cases, a teen may need to be separated from his peers for a few days of prayer and Word and personal shepherding, if he agrees to it, and if he’s doing so poorly that he’s infecting others with his problems and affecting everyone else very negatively. If a teen is in such poor spiritual condition that he’s bringing down his whole group and causing absolute havoc and requiring almost all the attention of the teen shepherd, to the neglect of the rest of the teen group, then to temporarily separate that teen from his peers may be the best solution. But such separation should be the last resort and should be for very limited periods of time. (ML #2892:60–62, 64–65, Lifelines 21).

110. During the time the Victor programs were underway, I wrote the 21 Letters that comprised the Tech Series. Anyone who read those Letters could clearly see that I was not promoting harsh discipline or cruelty, but rather the opposite—love, patience, listening, counseling, prayer, etc.

111. That’s not to say that such harsh discipline did not happen in some of the Victor programs, but I want to make it clear that this type of discipline was not Dad’s nor my policy. When we found out about it, we put a stop to it.

112. So while we did promote Victor programs, we did not know that some of them had turned so harsh. We were saddened to hear that some of you suffered. We again acknowledge that harsh, severe treatment of that type was and is wrong. We are very sorry we didn’t find out that it got so harsh until the programs had run their course. I apologized for this in ML #3016 and I do so again now. I am personally very sorry these things happened, as is Peter, and I apologize to any of you who suffered as a result of them. As you know, we have put rules in place in the Charter to prevent such harsh treatment from ever happening again.

113. Victor programs have not been in existence for years, and the conditions that made them possible no longer exist in our Homes. Our children are not in danger of being over-disciplined or harmed physically by their caregivers, as the discipline of the children in the Family is regulated by the Family Discipline Guidelines and the Charter. Here are important excerpts of the Charter:

CHILD DISCIPLINE RULES

A. Child discipline in the Family is governed by the rules published in the “Family Discipline Guidelines,” ML #2919, GN 591.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

H. Discipline their children according to the standard agreed upon by the voting members of the Home in which they reside, providing it is in accordance with the *Child Discipline Rules* on page 247 in the

“Fundamental Family Rules” and more fully expounded in “Family Discipline Guidelines” (ML# 2919). Take appropriate action in disciplining their children whose behavior has become a reproach to the cause of Christ and/or reflects negatively on the Family.

... No one is permitted to discipline any child more severely than what is allowed in the “Family Discipline Guidelines.” If they do, they will be violating the rights of the child and the “Fundamental Family Rules,” and will be in jeopardy of losing their Charter Member status. (The Charter, pp.69–70, 247).

114. We apologized for past hurts in Letters 2858, 3016, 3068 and 3091. (*Please see full references listed in paragraph 65 above.*) We again say that we are sincerely very sorry that any members of the Family (or former members who may be reading this) have been hurt through negative sexual experiences, or were treated unlovingly or harshly, or mistreated in Victor camps or in any other way by anyone during their time in the Family.



115. Now I want to talk about Mene for a moment. But before I do I want to say that I’m very sorry, Mene, for any and all harm and hurt you experienced when you lived in our Home or any other Home. Some years back I asked Sara to try to contact you so I could express my apology to you. The response we received was that you didn’t want to have any contact with Family members. I respected your wish and didn’t push the issue any further. I am afraid that since others have recently brought up the subject through letters to Family members and on the Web I am going to have to make some comment, but I wanted to first make this apology to you publicly.

116. Around the time that Mene left our Home we published the Letter “The Last State,” which talked about her time with us and which focused on the last months when the problems she was experiencing were at their height. Anyone who read that Letter knows that when Dad

finally confronted the situation he did so with extremely strong words when shaking her, and with some corporal punishment in the form of spanking her with a cane. This is how Dad felt led to handle what he and we felt was a case of demon oppression or possession. Anyone who has ever had any real experience with exorcisms knows that there can be loud yelling, restraints, etc.

117. In all my years with Dad prior to this time I never saw him handle a situation in that manner, and after that time I never saw him do so again. It was harsh, and in looking back, having learned much more about dealing with young people with similar problems, I would say it was wrong to go to the extreme that Dad did in Mene’s case. I’m sorry that we didn’t have the experience and the knowledge we do now, and because we didn’t, Mene underwent this experience.

118. Of course, it’s easy for our critics to look back 12 or 13 years and say that we should have done this or that differently. They weren’t some of those who spent months of their time caring for a young teen who needed full-time care, talking with her, reading with her, praying with her, answering her questions, making sure she wasn’t doing physical damage to herself or others, etc. These people gave themselves in love to care for a loved one who was undergoing some serious problems. They were not harsh but rather were tender and loving. Everyone who was involved did all they could to help Mene, at great personal sacrifice, including Dad, who showed her love and concern both before and after yelling at her.

119. I’m not saying this to condone or justify the yelling, shaking and spanking with a rod, but I want to put it in perspective. This occurred only after many months of trying to help her in other ways—very loving ways. It was used as a last resort. I’m sorry it was used at all. I am also sorry that we published anything about it then or referred to it later, as it put a young girl who was having problems in a very bad light.

120. As I said earlier, it is not our policy to mete out harsh discipline. Over the years I have

written numerous Letters about using love and understanding when faced with the problems of our young people, and we have very clear discipline rules that reflect our policy on this matter.

121. We still believe in laying hands on and praying for those who experience spiritual or mental problems. If the situation is serious in that the person is apt to cause harm to themselves or others, or if after prayer there is not an immediate improvement, then we recommend that they seek the help of the medical system, which has happened a few times over the past years.

122. Again, I want to apologize to any of those who have been hurt by any wrongdoing by anyone during their time in the Family. We ask your forgiveness. We have done all we can to prevent any such things happening again. The Family has changed, and even the judge who so strongly condemned some of the things that happened in the past officially stated in his written judgment that the Family is a safe place for children.

123. ACCUSATION: Mama is a control freak. Even though the Charter guarantees each Charter Member's rights, as well as articulates his or her responsibilities, Mama still holds all the power and control through the GNs and prophecy.

124. (Mama:) Those of you who live on the field and use the Charter know that there is plenty of opportunity for you to be in control of your own lives, Homes, ministries, and decisions. Since the time of its implementation, Peter and I have heard many, many positive reactions about the Charter, and no one is looking to give it up. If it were so useless a document that put so little power into the hands of the people and local leadership, there would have been a groundswell of discontent and we would have abolished the Charter years ago. But that hasn't been the case.

125. Each of you has the right to exercise

your personal initiative, faith and choice in the use of your gifts, talents, education and experience as you feel best. You also can live in the Home of your choice, providing that Home will have you. Or, as everyone knows, you are free to depart from the Family at any time you choose. You have the right to bring up any matter in your Home Council and have it brought to a vote. You're free to move from your present Home to another, or open your own Home at any time after submitting a 30-day notice. You have the right to be informed of the financial state of your Home, and if you're 18 or older, to participate in all financial decisions. You have the right to make all medical decisions regarding yourselves and your children, and to communicate directly with your area officers.

126. Each Family Home has the right to choose its own officers, determine its own basic nature, goals and operating procedures—including how you will spend your time, what your outreach methods will be, and where you will live. Each Home is free to determine its personnel make-up and vote to revoke the Home membership of one of its members, and also to disband the Home at any time it chooses to do so.

127. Your Home Council has the power to recommend someone be reclassified or excommunicated. You decide collectively how you will educate your children, as well as discipline them and errant Home members. You decide if you will permit a non-CM young person to live in your Home and under what conditions you will do so.

128. Peter and I have very little to do with the day-to-day running of your Homes. Yes, Peter and I lead the Family spiritually as God's appointed shepherds. But prayerfully determining the spiritual direction for the Family and receiving the Lord's fresh Word from Heaven is not synonymous with "control"—because you are voluntarily in the Family. You signed the Charter Membership contract of your own accord, therefore you willingly decided to obey counsel put forth by the Lord via the GNs. That's your choice, not control.

129. (Jesus speaking:) Maria and Peter are My servants, doing My bidding. They share with you what I show them, and they do so at the risk of being ridiculed, scorned, and even falsely accused. I am the One leading the Family, but I need your king and queen to be My embodiment for you. They didn't ask for the great responsibility that they carry, but they carry it with joy and a great measure of prayerfulness and wisdom, because they love Me and they fear Me and it's what I've asked them to do.

130. I'm the one leading the Family through your anointed shepherds. It's not their ideas, or their programs, or their words, or their message. It's all My doing. They're just yielded vessels in My hands, humbly serving Me and you, their Family, who they love so dearly. So if you don't like the way things are, or the way things are run, or the Word that is being published, don't blame Maria and Peter—they're just following Me. Ultimately I'm the One in charge, and they don't make a move or change or do anything without My stamp of approval.

131. Your king and queen are giving their lives for you. They spend hours in My presence day after day, week after week, year after year, in order to be faithful messengers of My Words to you. They didn't choose this job; I chose them. They're dependent on Me, desperate with Me, and they're giving their all—their time, health, blood, sweat and tears—for you. They're leading you where I show them to lead you. They're following Me so closely, and that's why I've kept them in this place of honor as your king and queen. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

132. ACCUSATION: Mama and Peter shoot themselves in the foot by publishing ridiculously bizarre, controversial Letters. We've gotten over our problems of persecution, but then they go and publish something else that's going to cause trouble. People try to tell them that their teachings and doctrines will bring the wrath of the System and the ire of man, but they won't listen.

133. (Mama:) To hear some people talk, you'd think we were running some kind of a System business in which we produce our product according to the going market and preferences of the world climate. But we're not. We're a revolution! Yes, we're a missionary movement, a publishing house, a follow-up machine in the making. We wear all kinds of different "hats," but we're also a revolution, as we have been from the beginning.

134. What makes us revolutionary is the Word we receive from the Lord—the New Wine. Why do you think the Lord calls it "New Wine" anyway? Because it's new!

135. Peter's and my primary responsibility before the Lord is to receive His Word and give it to you. Your primary job is to take that Word and give it to the world! The Family is different. Unlike the other churches and new religious movements, we're not out to gain popularity. Like Dad said, "The prophets didn't prophesy for audience reaction, to hear the laughs and the howls and the amen's and the applause. They just spoke the Words of God, come what may, live or die, sink or swim, rise or fall, and that was that, flat!" (ML #303A:69).

136. We certainly don't deliberately try to cause trouble and negative reactions from people outside the Family, but if it comes down to a choice between obeying God or compromising for fear of man, we will obey God. That was always Dad's policy, and that is ours as well.

137. There are plenty of other churches and fellowships of very sincere Christians who love the Lord and want to be close to Him and who have a much more mainstream doctrine, if that's what you're looking for. But if you remain in the Family, you can expect new revelations, new truths, and new directions, because God still speaks today!

138. Let's have a little reality check: Don't forget God in the equation. The GNs are not some concoction from the minds of Peter and me. They contain the Word of the Lord as He gives it to us. It is our responsibility before the Lord to give you what He wants you to have. We cannot hold back or censor it in order to make it more mainstream and "normal."

139. We're not just your shepherds and the leaders and pastors of our religious movement; we're prophets, as are you! And if God's message is unconventional, well, God's prophets have always been known for their radical, outlandish, strange, unconventional messages and deeds, and have often been ridiculed for them.

140. Look at Noah. He spent more than 100 years building the ark, preaching that God was going to destroy the world by a great flood, and only his wife, sons, and their wives believed him. But he was right!

141. Look at Abraham. God told him to leave his family and friends and go he knew not where, to some land someplace that God would somehow give him. Then when he got there, God told him that he'd have a son when he was 100 years old—and not only that, but when the son arrived, God told him to take him up on Mount Moriah and kill him! But Abraham believed God and obeyed, and came to be known as the father of faith because of his trust in God despite His unusual orders.

142. Look at Moses. He fled Egypt, no doubt wanted for murder, and spent 40 years in the desert just tending sheep. Then when God sent him back to confront Pharaoh, he preached and prophesied that God was going to deliver the Hebrews from the world empire of the day, Egypt, totally by faith! He had no armies, and he was so poor at communicating that his brother Aaron had to talk for him!

143. Look at Joshua. He was crazy enough to believe that he could send his men marching around the walls of Jericho, blowing their horns, and the walls would fall down. But his men believed him, and God fulfilled His promise.

144. Look at Gideon. God told him that he could defeat an army of 120,000 Midianites with just 300 men—and he was so confident of victory that he sent 32,000 men home who had doubts about it, just leaving the ones who were fully convinced along with him. And he did it, starting with trumpets, torches, and clay pots.

145. Look at Samson, Elijah and Elisha, with their outlandish message and acts, at Samuel, and at King David of old. And look at

the prophets that followed them: Isaiah was told to go naked for three years as a testimony of how God was going to strip Israel. Ezekiel was told to spend a year lying on his side in front of a model of Jerusalem and eat cakes baked with dung as a testimony. Hosea was told to marry a prostitute to demonstrate the Lord's love for Israel.

146. And if you want a prophet with an unusual message, look at Jesus! We're very familiar with His Words and message today, but think how radical it must have been back then—and still is: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mat.6:24). "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?" (Mat.6:25). "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their dead" (Mat.8:22). "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Mat.10:34–35). "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad" (Mat.12:30).

147. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. If thy foot offend thee, cut it off. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out" (Mark 9:43,45,47). "My mother and My brethren are these which hear the Word of God, and do it" (Luk.8:21). "Who-soever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it" (Luk.9:24). "If any man come to Me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. Who-soever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luk. 14:26, 33). "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Luk.20:35).

148. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). "The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). "Whose soever sins ye remit, they

are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained” (John 20:23).

149. So if all the prophets have preached and practiced a radical message, and the Son of God did so as well, why should people think it odd that we do too?

150. ACCUSATION: The prophecies in the GNs are edited or compiled to put a certain “slant” on what the Lord said. Mama disregards prophecies on the other side, and only publishes the prophecies that confirm what she wants to say. Thus she uses prophecy to “control” the Family by giving her views or desires more credibility or weight by having the counsel be from the Lord, in prophecy, when in actuality it’s only saying what Mama wants it to say. She manipulates and coerces people through prophecy.

151. (*Peter:*) Dad often called Mama “the insatiable woman.” Since marrying her and hearing from the Lord frequently with her, I understand more fully how true that statement is! Mama can never get enough of the Lord’s Words! She asks question after question, from all different angles, because she wants the full picture. Often she’ll have several people pray about the same question, or at least different aspects of it, just to make sure that the answer is well rounded. And when she’s going over one of our publications or working on a GN, or even going over prophecies that are for individuals, she almost never takes anything out or wants to narrow the subject, unless it’s so broad and general that it’s difficult to apply. She always wants to enlarge it, to get something on the other aspects that aren’t yet covered, to ask the Lord about the other side, to confirm with the Lord that this is really the message He wants to give and the tone He wants to give it in. She goes to great lengths to make sure she’s not missing something.

152. Dad was a real extremist at times. The Lord often used that side of his nature to get us moving as a Family. Mama’s part of their team-

work was always to bring up the other side. She was usually the one asking about other situations and how they would be affected, or giving the benefit of the doubt. And it’s still the same with her teamworking with the Lord. Rather than trying to slant prophecies in one direction or another, she’s always asking the Lord more questions, because if there’s another side, or more well-rounded counsel to be had, she wants it, and she wants to give it to you! She’s desperate not to misrepresent the Lord or His message in any way.

153. There are times when she does ask the Lord to talk on a specific topic. For example, “Let’s ask Dad to give us his views about such-and-such. We really need a message for the Family about that, because we’ve been having these problems....” But even when she asks a question that seems to be coming from a certain angle, she’s open to whatever the Lord gives, and she encourages those who are hearing from the Lord to be open as well. And then once she receives that one message, it doesn’t stop there. She goes on to ask about the other sides and what further things He would have to say, or if there’s anything that’s missing, that’s needed to make the message more complete. She also gets confirmation after confirmation on the general direction.

154. Whenever there is a GN that contains major direction or changes, Mama and I have talked about it extensively and prayed about it repeatedly. We also counsel with the CROs on such matters, and they are not “yes men” who don’t have opinions. They comment on aspects that would affect their field, and they bring up any potential problems they see.

155. You can rest assured, dear Family, that by the time you receive a GN, Mama has asked the Lord many, many questions concerning its content, and it has been prayed about by several of her channels, from many different angles, and it has been counseled about. Even after she’s prepared a GN and is happy with it, it goes to proofreaders in WS who are then free to bring up any questions that they have, and each of those questions is prayed about as well. And if at any time in the process of preparing a GN for

you the Lord makes reference to an exception, to another side of the story, or brings out something that would make the counsel more well rounded, she always wants to include it, and often will make last-minute additions if that's when they come up, just because she doesn't want to miss anything—and she doesn't want you to miss anything either!

156. Of course, the crux of this question comes down to faith and belief in the Word—and that is something that's in your court to pray about. I'm very sorry to hear that any of you would feel that the prophecies are slanted or manipulated, because if you aren't able to have faith in the Word that the Lord is pouring out through Mama and me, it would understandably make it very difficult to implement it or move forward with the way the Lord is directing the Family.

157. Our faith in the Word—and in the Lord's anointing on Mama as His appointed winetaster—is one of our basic fundamental beliefs. I don't condemn those of you who have had battles over whether Mama is really getting it right, but it's important that you see such a battle for what it is—a serious attack of the Enemy, trying to get you to doubt the Lord's Words and destroy the faith that you place in them.

158. Believing in the Word is essential to a healthy spiritual life, so when you're battling doubts it's not something that you can take lightly. I'm glad we can cover this question in the GNs so that those of you who are sincerely wondering can know—albeit by faith—how Mama operates. But beyond that, it's your choice as to what you choose to believe. However, if you can't accept Mama's role as the Lord's anointed prophetess to lead the Family, then please ask the Lord to help you, because with this attitude you won't have the faith in the Word that you need to have. You won't be able to go with full faith in the direction that the Lord is moving the Family because you'll always be wondering whether it's really the right way to go.

159. If you feel that Mama isn't giving you “the full scoop” in the GNs, or is holding something back or trying to manipulate things to go the way she wants them to go rather than the

way the Lord is leading, ask the Lord for a confirmation of His leading. Otherwise when a new GN comes out, the Word won't have the effect in your life that it should have—the effect of giving you life, strength, resistance to the Enemy's attacks, etc.

160. Please pray about this and take it seriously. See it for the attack of the Enemy that it is, and go on the attack to have prayer against it, and then don't entertain his thoughts and lies. He'll make them sound very reasonable, but they're half-truths whose sole purpose is to destroy your faith—which is your only shield against him. Don't try to counter them with carnally minded logic. The only weapons that are effective against this sort of attack are the spiritual ones—the Word, prayer, praise, having united prayer, and hearing from the Lord yourself. (*For more on this, read “Crisis of Faith,” ML #3088–90, Lifelines 23, and “Believing Prophecy,” ML #3130, Lifelines 24.*)

161. ACCUSATION: If Mama doesn't slant the prophecies to suit her own whims, then what about the stories we've heard about important revelations being changed during the production stage when people complained about them or voiced contrary opinions? Were the revelations wrong to start with? Mama is God's mouthpiece and winetaster, but that still wouldn't seem to give her the right to change God's Word. Furthermore, why didn't she get it right in the first place?

162. (Peter:) As I explained above, each GN goes through a particular process. After Mama and I work on it, it is read by a number of proofreaders, who we call “locals” (short for local proofreaders). This is usually about 25 people of all ages, ministries, and varying nationalities. Those people comment in writing about anything that in their opinion is unclear, that would reveal our location, that raises questions in their minds or that they feel people on the field will have questions about or would like a clarification on, etc.

163. The locals are quite outspoken people, and we're happy that they are. If we just wanted a bunch of “yes men,” we wouldn't bother with locals in the first place. They can really let it rip, so Mama is very used to having people critique the GNs. Usually it's constructive criticism—although at times people have gotten rather emotional and riled up and have expressed themselves in a heated manner if something didn't seem right to them. Mama doesn't mind hearing people's opinions, even when the presentation is not the best. She doesn't take it personally. I doubt very many people could take the amount of feedback that she gets on something they're working on; most people are much too sensitive. Mama appreciates people's honesty and seriously considers every single suggestion or comment, and has someone ask the Lord about it. I mean this literally. She prayerfully thinks about and prays about every single suggestion.

164. Granted, she doesn't always agree with each person's point of view. Sometimes people say, “This is too heavy! This will blow away the young people! People will overreact; you shouldn't get it out.” But if after serious consideration, counsel, and seeking the Lord she still believes it's the Lord's will, then she publishes it. She is determined, as was Dad, to not withhold the Word from you. Getting out the Word is her primary responsibility.

165. Regarding the GNs that are the most controversial or that will bring about the greatest changes in the Family, Mama seeks the counsel of not only our local proofreaders, but also of all the CROs. She does this because she is wise enough to know that there are thousands of different circumstances in the Family. After all, there are various age groups and countless different cultures and situations. She doesn't presume to understand every aspect of field life and exactly how people in all situations will be affected, so she counsels, which is wisdom.

166. Then she pores over each and every suggestion from the CROs. Yes, changes are made based on their comments. But instead of seeing this as some kind of weakness or fault, you should see this as an act of love. She does that for you. It makes her job much, much more

difficult and time-consuming, but she wants the Word that's published, especially major revelations or pushes that will affect your lives greatly, to be the best it can be, with as many aspects covered and questions answered as possible. She doesn't want to make it difficult for you or for you to get off track or mixed up because some important point that she didn't think of was not addressed. She firmly believes that “in the multitude of counselors there is safety” (Pro. 11:14). She knows when she has received the Word of the Lord, but she also knows that there is a huge variety of ways that Word can be pre-sented and applied, and that's where she needs the counsel of others.

167. Some GNs about major revelations or moves of the Spirit had some changes made in them as a result of people's reservations. Let's take the “Loving Jesus” revelation. Some people are spreading the word that the original version implied that anyone who didn't practice it was yielded to the Devil! Ha! That's not true! Of course, there were many additions made to the “Loving Jesus” series as a result of people's questions. There were also some deletions made, because the Lord indicated that some phraseology or illustrations were unnecessary and would cause it to be more difficult for you to receive it. Lots of clarifications about the man being a woman in spirit were added. It was made clear in the finalized GNs that the Loving Jesus revelation was not a fundamental Family belief.

168. Anyone would agree that it's wiser to present such a radical revelation in the most palatable way possible, right? Why would anyone think that is a bad thing? Why would you criticize Mama for listening to the comments of those who really had a hard time with the original presentation and trying to adjust the presentation to make it easier for you? Most of the parts that were “too meaty” for the original introduction of the revelation were subsequently published over the next years. Obviously that was a wise plan, since you then had a chance to get used to it little by little.

169. The “Loving Jesus” revelation itself was not changed as a result of people's suggestions or even complaints; it remained intact.

But many additions were made as questions were answered; hence, the length of the series. But just because there were some changes made—additions, clarifications and deletions to make it easier for the Family to receive—that certainly doesn't make it a false prophecy or revelation. Anyone who has that idea certainly doesn't know much about prophecy and has a very narrow concept of the Lord's way of teamworking with us. As you'll see once the full series of "Understanding Prophecy" is published, the Lord expects us to keep coming back to Him and getting more from Him each time there is a question or needed clarification. This isn't tampering with prophecy; this is wisdom!

170. There were some very adamant cries from some of our co-workers at the time we were receiving the "Loving Jesus" revelation who pleaded with Mama and me to not publish it. They said it would destroy the Family. They threatened to leave. But that's where we drew the line. Answering questions and making adjustments to help people to receive the truth is one thing, but not publishing the truth is another thing altogether! We knew God had given that message and He wanted you to benefit from it. That is where Mama and I must obey God rather than man!

171. We are determined to publish the Word as the Lord gives it. And for those of you who are now comfortable with loving the Lord intimately, aren't you happy we did? Those of you who regularly practice the "Loving Jesus" revelation have probably reached a place in your lives by now where it feels quite natural and comfortable. That's how it is with those in our Home. It's like, "What's the big deal?" So you say mild love words to the Lord when praising Him unitedly; you listen to the Loving Jesus tapes, which by the way are favorites now in the Family; you say love words of whatever level of eroticism you feel comfortable with in your private times of praise, and you say whatever you feel led to say when having sex, either alone or with a partner. It becomes a normal part of life and not the big bugaboo that our detractors would like to make it out to be. You have also witnessed the rewards and blessings of loving

the Lord in this way. The "Loving Jesus" revelation is our firmly held religious belief, and is a private matter! (By the way, no one that we know of has been reclassified or threatened with reclassification on the grounds of not believing or practicing the "Loving Jesus" revelation, as it's not a fundamental Family belief. In fact, we have made it clear repeatedly that believing in this revelation is not required to retain your CM membership.)

172. Some are worried about our security because we published an edited, but still quite detailed, version of the "Loving Jesus" GNs for junior teens. We prayed about this desperately, seeking the Lord repeatedly. The reason the Lord led us to publish this was because this series was being read during the Family Birthday Feast and we wanted to preempt the junior teens finding out about the revelation from their older brothers and sisters. Some say the reading of this was a stumbling block for junior teens, but the Lord indicated that this was the safer way for them to be informed. Because had they heard about it in an exaggerated, gossipy, or even mocking way from their peers, it would have been very confusing. As far as the sexual aspect, junior teens vary in their interest in sex and their personal experience, but it's pretty safe to say that most 14- and 15-year-olds masturbate or at least know about masturbation. Since we don't consider masturbation a sin and it's not encouraging them to perform a sex act with another person, there's no reason to be so secretive about it.

173. The rating on the junior teen version of the "Loving Jesus" series is changed, however, so that it can be read with them at the discretion of you parents, and you can make that decision yourselves. At this point in time your junior teens probably aren't even thinking about the Loving Jesus revelation, so of course they're not as eager to get the full scoop from their older brothers and sisters about it. The circumstances today are much different than they were during the Feast when the revelation was being introduced, which of course drew a lot of attention to it.



174. Okay, on to a different subject: There have been rumors circulating about the “marriage of the generations,” that it was canned as a result of complaints from the CROs. This refers to a move of the Spirit that some of you are aware of, as it was introduced during Summit ’96. This was a move to bring the two generations together—a move which was very much of the Lord and which is still in progress.

175. It’s true that at one point Mama was considering presenting the “marriage of the generations” at the Family Birthday Feast of 1998. The CROs read the GNs, as they often do with the Feast material or when it’s a controversial matter. Some raised their concerns that the term “marriage of the generations” would be misinterpreted; that was a problem. Others said the Family was not ready for this, that there were not enough safeguards in place and that there was the possibility that young SGA women would feel pressured to have sex with FGA men.

176. After hearing from the CROs and praying further, it was obvious that the Family was not ready for the “marriage of the generations.” It is true that there were not enough safeguards in place, and there was not enough understanding of the Law of Love. There was no threat from the CROs that the Family would fall apart if this move of the Spirit were to be published, but there was concern for the happiness of the younger generation, the young women in particular. Some very significant changes were made in the GNs primarily to protect the young women from feeling undue pressure to have sex with older men, and to prevent problems in marriages as a result of runaway outside relationships.

177. Also, as we continued to pray about it, the Lord made it immensely clear that the “marriage of the generations” was much more than sexual sharing. Sexual sharing was just a tiny part of it, but that tiny part had potential to be exaggerated, misinterpreted, and abused. The “marriage of the generations” was in essence supposed to be a unity of heart and spirit, which comes from mutual respect and working together, just as we have in our Home. To make sure that that was the primary emphasis, rather than a sexual focus, the presentation of the need for

unity between the generations was changed. The term “marriage of the generations” was not used, but instead the Lord showed us to use the term “the uniting of the generations,” which is much less “sexual” sounding. This was a small but important change. Other changes were made as well.

178. Was this a bad thing to not promote the “marriage of the generations” in the Family Birthday Feast of 1998? Is there something so horrible about changing the presentation of the Lord’s direction to avoid misunderstandings and to protect people from being hurt? Certainly not!

179. Some of the same people who accuse us of not being sensitive enough to foresee possible problems with the Law of Love and change our Letters accordingly now accuse us for doing this very thing! First they attack us for not setting more safeguards to protect our young people, and then they attack us for doing so.

180. We do not have plans to publish any GNs on the “marriage of the generations” because this is already happening naturally. With the publication of the GNs on unity and the Law of Love series, and the new series on uniting the generations, the two generations are becoming closer in spirit, with fewer barriers, which is the main “marriage” that the Lord wanted to see come to pass. (See ML #3092:118–120; #3095:20–22, 25–36; Lifelines 23.)

181. It is happening gently, and within the guidelines and boundaries that have been established and articulated in the Law of Love GN series, which include: not pressuring anyone to share sexually; that all sexual sharing by married partners be done in counsel with and consideration for their mate; that responsibility will be taken by the man in the event of pregnancy, etc. (See “Overcoming the Generation Gap,” ML #3161, Lifelines 24; “Golden Victories,” ML #3162, Lifelines 25; The “Law of Love” series, MLs #3201–3211, Lifelines 25; “Self-Righteousness—The Great Barrier to Uniting the Generations,” ML #3293, GN 897.)

182. Mama is not perfect, neither does she claim to be perfect. She knows this and she knows that just as the Lord has put all of you in

teamworks, she needs a teamwork as well. This is the Lord's plan for all of us, that we work in teamwork and with the counsel of others.

183. Of all the people I know in the Family, I would say that Mama accepts her need for teamworking and help from others the most. She is open to the most counsel from the most people, and she considers listening to others to be part of her God-given responsibility.

184. She does not claim that the GNs are perfectly well rounded and accurate after she has worked on them and before she has counseled with others about them. It is only after the Lord has used her big teamwork of the locals proofreaders, as well as any others who need to be consulted and counseled with, and only after everything has been prayed about and re-prayed about when necessary, that she feels that the GNs are exactly the way the Lord wants them to be for your instruction and edification.

185. When a GN is sent to you, after the Lord's confirmation that it is ready to go out, then you can consider it as well rounded and accurate and as "perfect" as the Lord knows is needed at the time. Before a GN is sent out to the Family, however, it is still in the "draft" stage and the Lord and Mama expect that it will go through changes. There is safety in the multitude of counselors. The Lord doesn't allow any of us to be sufficient in ourselves—even Mama. He makes it necessary for her to have counselors too.

186. Counseling is a way of life for Mama and me, and we wouldn't think of making decisions on our own. Even when we have a pretty good idea we're right and we go to the Lord for His confirmation, we still discuss and check major decisions with our counselors. This is true not only in our work on the GNs, but also regarding any decisions that affect the Family, our Home, our co-workers, the leadership of the Family, etc.

187. ACCUSATION: By encouraging the Family to live the Law of Love, including more sexual sharing, the Family is again fomenting

an over-sexualized atmosphere where the children will once again be in danger of improper behavior on the part of adults.

188. (Peter:) The Law of Love GN series was not published to promote wild, irresponsible sex. It was published, in large part, to promote unity, which is the goal of sexual sharing within our Homes, as well as to address some very needed subjects, such as: young women getting pregnant and the men not taking responsibility, minimum responsibility of the father of a child, guidelines for relationships when one of the people involved is already married, understanding and overcoming jealousy, making sure adequate attention was given FGA women, and living the One Wife vision so people who are lonely, like single mothers, can receive the love and help they need. The subject of sacrificial sharing was touched on, but very lightly, and that is certainly not the main focus. This series was really very practical and tedious, and hardly a "hot" sex document promoting wild orgies or telling the Family you have to be "spending a lot more time having sex, whether you feel like it or not."

189. The circumstances that exist today in our Homes regarding practicing the sexual aspect of the Law of Love are very different than they were years ago before the Charter. With the publishing of the Law of Love series and the many new Charter rules that govern our sexual sharing, there are many safeguards. There is much less chance of people going off the deep end in any way.

190. If you see any inappropriate activity or interaction between people of any age, you are responsible to report it. There are rules and consequences for breaking those rules.

191. ACCUSATION: Mama and Peter don't listen to people. They're closed-minded. They're determined to have their own way no matter what.

192. (Peter:) It's interesting how the same people who accuse us of wrongdoing because

we prayerfully consider people's comments and opinions, and make adjustments in the presentation of the Word and the counsel for the Family in the GNs, also accuse us of being closed-minded and not listening to people. As the leader, you have to make the final decision. When you listen to people and change your position to agree with their views, they're happy. When you listen to people and don't change your position, they're not happy. But the point that bugs them is not that you don't listen, which is what detractors would have you believe; it's that you didn't agree with their point of view. That's what makes them mad. No matter how much courtesy you show and no matter how much you seriously consider someone's views and pray about them and try to accommodate them, if, in the end, your final decision is different than that person's views, they often get mad and hold a grudge, but their excuse is, "They don't listen."

193. As I explained above, Mama and I listen to others and seek counsel as much as we can. Besides the thousands and thousands of communications that we receive each year from CROs, VSSs, and individuals in the Family, we also are aware of many of the comments and suggestions that you write in on your TRFs. We also hold a Summit approximately every two years during which the major Family problems are discussed with the CROs and prayed about.

194. Between listening to the Lord, the CROs and VSSs, and you via my visits to the field and the many letters, e-mails, comments and suggestions that Mama and I receive from you, we spend most of our time listening! We not only listen, but we make changes based on what we hear and what you write us. That's why you've received the Charter and a multitude of new Letters over the past five years, including the new "Action Series." We value your counsel and communications and take action based on them.

195. ACCUSATION: Mama and Peter treat people badly, especially those who are not totally loyal and "on board." They're abusive,

controlling, manipulative, self-centered, deceitful and callous leaders who are willing to do just about anything to save their reputations and preserve their image.

196. (Mama:) I have heard that some former members feel that way about Peter and me. I know it's difficult for you, dear Family, when you hear people talk about us who supposedly know us so well and who have worked with us closely. It's extremely confusing when people who have been in WS tell you stories that make us look like monsters, like terribly selfish, uncaring, manipulative, self-serving people who think only of ourselves. These stories are presented in detail, with "she/he said this" or "she/he did that" and they seem so believable.

197. The only thing I can say is that such stories usually represent complex situations in which one tiny moment of interaction or one minute shred of a conversation might be presented, which twists the truth. Anyone who has been in the Family for any length of time knows that working with people and helping people through their problems is a complicated process. Peter and I have tried to be as loving and kind as possible with those in our Home and in WS. If we have sent or given people prophecies from the Lord or Dad, we have done so in combination with personal shepherding when possible. We have been very patient, and have given people much time to overcome their bitternesses and spiritual problems. We don't just lop people off and tell them (through prophecy or otherwise) that they're full of the Devil, or threaten to send them away or separate them from their families. I love and appreciate the people I work with. I love David and Techi as a mother and Trevor as a grandmother. I love and respect the young people who have chosen to make the sacrifice to live behind the scenes. Probably some people would try to tell you differently.

198. It's a strange thing how two people can remember a situation so differently, isn't it? I know our detractors write these outlandish accounts and they are so sure they're right. They scream, "I was there! This is how it was!" But there is often so much more to the story that, if

it were known and told, would portray us and all involved very differently.

199. Another particularly convincing method of those who are disgruntled and unhappy with the Family or some aspect of the Word, leadership, or our life is when they latch onto some event that took place and give it their own particular interpretation, saying it was wrong. Then they use that example to validate their argument that “because this is wrong, everything else must be wrong too.”

200. Peter and I cannot possibly refute every story that’s told about how supposedly horrible and mean and cruel we are, just as Dad couldn’t. We’re too busy trying to fulfill the Lord’s commission to feed the sheep to spend our time writing volumes explaining the real story of every situation that our detractors bring up. We’ll let the works that we do bear witness of us, as the Lord told His detractors (John 5:36).

201. It’s like the story of the man who helped build the Panama Canal:

While contending with the manifold problems of geography and climate in the building of the Panama Canal, Colonel George Washington Goethals had to endure the carping criticism of countless busybodies back home who freely predicted that he would never complete his great task. But the resolute builder pressed steadily forward in his work, and said nothing.

“Aren’t you going to answer your critics?” a subordinate inquired.

“In time,” Goethals replied.

“How?”

The great engineer smiled. “With the canal,” he replied. (See Good Thots 1, page 757, #25.)

202. We don’t have time to refute every story told about us, but we can remind you of the scripture, “Because they received not the love of the truth, God will send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie” (2Thes.2:10–11). Some of these stories are history rewritten, but these former members really believe what they write. That is one reason why they can sound so sin-

cere and convincing and make you feel sorry for them as the poor victims. But remember, just because they say something happened doesn’t necessarily make it so!

203. You might wonder how someone can be loyal and true for a long time in the Family and then have a huge change of heart and become very negative, bitter and vindictive. Such changes of heart and mindset start off gradually and slowly. It doesn’t happen overnight with just one big thing that the person finds hard to accept, and because of that one big thing makes the decision to leave behind the life they once loved. But once they do, then little by little they forget or choose to block out the things they used to cherish—the years of faithful service, all the times that the Lord and the Family provided and cared for them, all the blessings of Family life, the joy, fulfillment and challenge of full-time missionary service.

204. Sadly, these people have been weakened in spirit by having allowed an infiltration of the Enemy’s lies into their mind, a slow and constant dripping away at their convictions with a steady stream of his doubts and lies about this and that.

205. The person who is weakening in heart and spirit might not even notice it. It might not seem like a big deal at first; it’s just a little negative thinking, a little entertaining of some bitterness or resentment. But the problem comes when such thoughts of the Enemy become a habit, a regular part of their mindset and thought pattern.

206. When someone entertains and accepts thoughts of resentment, bitterness, doubt, and the lies of the Enemy and doesn’t seek to be washed and cleansed from those lies, their conviction becomes a little weaker. The longer and more often someone allows their mind and spirit to dwell on the negative instead of resisting it, the easier it becomes for them to start to believe the lies as if they were facts and the truth. Truth resisted loses its power over the mind, and as a person turns away from the truth and refuses to be humbled by the truth, he begins to accept and believe the lie.

207. In such cases someone’s mind will twist the truth, distort the facts, misinterpret

events because of months or years of wrong thinking, wrong attitudes, and a strong desire to justify themselves and blame others. Even if the truth is obvious to others and everyone else can see it, still, they will not be able to see the truth that is right before their eyes. They have chosen to believe a lie in order to support their position. It's too difficult, too humbling, too devastating to their pride to admit they're wrong, that they've been wrong about many things; so they hang on to the lie, they maintain their stand.

208. They actually believe the lie because they have chosen to. They have chosen to reject the truth and embrace the lie, and because they've made this decision in their mind and heart, even the way they look at past events or facts becomes twisted and distorted. This is how people become obsessed with thoughts that are not even real or true, with thoughts of things that never happened, or didn't happen the way they think it did.

209. Just because someone says something happened one way does not make it so in every case. Just because someone tells you, "This is what happened, I was there," does not mean it's true—or if it is, there may be much more to the truth that they are not bringing out. Sometimes people can be convinced of the righteousness of their cause, but they are sadly deceived because they resisted and rejected the truth.

210. Peter and I love you dearly and we've tried to express that love in every way we possibly can. We've tried to be as open as possible with you through the GNs. We have written about our marriage, our Home, our activities, and our personal battles. We have had as many people visit our Home personally as we could. Peter has traveled to almost every continent and has personally met and talked with thousands of Family members. Peter has made videos that were viewed by thousands. I have traveled and met with various CROs. Peter and I made 15 hours of videos that were viewed by the CROs and VSs. We will continue to ask the Lord to show us what we can do to help and serve you better, dear Family. What more than that we can do, I don't know.

211. Now it's up to you to determine if you

will believe that what you see, hear, and read from us is the truth. I know you want to believe, and I am praying for you, that your faith fail not.

212. ACCUSATION: Mama and Peter talk about all this "purging" of the Family if you're not "on board," like the S2K, because they just want to get rid of any dissenting opinions. They don't want anyone to disagree with them; they only want people they have full control over through prophecy to be in the Family. Unbelief and dissension are not tolerated at all.

213. (Mama:) The Lord has spoken extensively over the last five years about the need to have greater unity in the Family. This, of course, means unity of spirit, where we're all fighting for the same cause and working together to reach the same goals. Some people would have you believe that to seek such unity is some kind of a devious plot by Peter and me to ferret out anyone who doesn't agree with us personally because we just can't stand being confronted or argued with. Our detractors would tell you that we don't allow dissenting opinions. That's not true. We welcome dissenting opinions; we greatly appreciate it when people are honest with us. We know and accept the Scriptural admonition to counsel, and we do so. Those who know us well know that we hardly ever make a decision without counseling with others, and the more impact the decision will have on others or the Family overall, the more we counsel. We also pray about our decisions and hear from the Lord in prophecy about them, sometimes many times, getting many confirmations not only ourselves but also out of the mouths of various channels.

214. As was explained earlier, the final decisions do rest with me and Peter, and we don't always agree with others' opinions, nor do we always do what others say we should do. That is the case with anyone who runs any kind of organization, business, corporation or church. Someone must make the final decision, and you

can never please everyone all the time. Some people get upset, not because they're not listened to, but because their advice is not heeded.

215. The idea that our promotion of unity is to cleanse the Family of any so-called "healthy dissenting opinions" is not true. The kind of unity the Lord and we seek does not reduce everyone to mindless robots. We're talking about unity where people can counsel, have dialogue, seek the Lord together and come to decisions in love and faith. We're talking about unity that makes your Home a happy, peaceful place and a wonderful testimony to outsiders.

216. You know from the Scriptures and from Dad's teachings that unity is important and brings the blessings of God. A lack of unity is a problem and can cause the Lord to lift His blessings. That is nothing new.

Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand (Mat.12:25).

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Acts 2:1,4,41).

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all (Acts 4:32-33).

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowli-

ness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph.4:1-3,14-16).

217. Of course, we don't want people to be in the Family who don't believe in the Letters or the Charter. That's just common sense. Why would people be so upset about not being able to be in the Family when they're so opposed to our beliefs and rules? Why is that even such an issue? It seems perfectly logical to me that we have the standard and expectation that we do. And it's not just the Family that expects that its members would adhere to the teachings or principles of the organization.

218. Do you think the chief executive of a company would be very happy if some of his managers and employees were constantly belittling the company goals and his leadership? I doubt those people would last very long in the company. Why? Because their boss is a ruthless, uncaring, manipulative dictator? No, because he wants his company to succeed.

219. If someone didn't want to be a doctor and didn't agree with established medical practices, why would he hang around in medical school? Or what room is there in the Bar Association for the lawyer who decides to invent his own code of ethics? I could list example after example of other fields, too, where loyalty and devotion and united goals and beliefs are necessary and required—monasteries, convents, sports teams, special units of the military, etc. It's just the way it works in all areas of life, that

you become part of a group because you believe in their beliefs and practices. It's not a strange concept.

220. It's only natural that any disciple in the Family would want to live with people who are sold out and fully dedicated to the vision, goals and beliefs of the Family. What a drag it would be to have someone in your Home who is badmouthing the Word and the Family rules, and talking negatively to your children about everything you parents are trying to teach them. What a bummer to work hard to have a strong spiritual atmosphere in your Home so you can be a good sample to the sheep who come by, only to have it wrecked by people who are just there for the "lifestyle." Having unbelievers in your Home just doesn't work. It doesn't make your work for the Lord strong; it doesn't make your Home a happy place, and to allow people who don't even believe the Word to continue living in your Home doesn't help them either.

221. It only stands to reason that if someone doesn't believe in the New Wine, which guides Family policy and beliefs, they would be happier and better off living outside the Family. Of course our core beliefs remain—love for the Lord and reaching the lost with the Gospel—and we're happy to work with anyone who has those same values, whether they like all our other beliefs or not. But to be a member of the Family takes a little more than agreeing on those basics. They are our basic beliefs, but in order to achieve them in the particular way the Lord has given us the desire to do so requires a certain level of spirituality and faith that we realize is not for everyone.

222. It greatly disappoints me to hear of people who have actually stayed in the Family for years when they knew they didn't believe the prophecies, didn't have faith in Peter and me as the Lord's leadership for this particular movement, and didn't agree with our doctrines. One person actually admits to staying in the Family for two years and eight months after he had vowed never to defend Family doctrine and never to lift a finger to present the Family in a good light again. He had pretty much stopped reading GNs and was ashamed to be a member

of the Family. To me, that's terribly sad. It's pitiful to think that someone would spend years of his life in one of our Homes when he no longer had the personal conviction that he was where the Lord wanted him to be.

223. If someone loves Jesus and the lost, but they want to serve Him without the things that make the Family different, then surely that person could find another church or charitable organization that would suit him or her better. There are many progressive, charismatic, growing churches in countries around the world which would be happy to have them, and where they could be a great blessing.

224. I know our detractors give you the "institutionalized" theory—how they wondered whether they could survive in the outside world—but I don't buy that! You Family members are bright individuals who know how to take initiative. This is especially true since the Charter, as you've had to make your own decisions without as much help and oversight from your overseers. You're "survivors," you're flexible and adaptable, you're smart and experienced, usually way beyond your years. You're well accustomed to raising your own support, establishing your own work and accommodations, teaching your own children, etc. So this pitiful excuse for hanging around for literally years while being supposedly beaten down and manipulated and controlled is pretty ridiculous, if you ask me! Sure, some people have left the Family and not had such good success, but there have been plenty who have left and been successful and who continue to be professing Christians who love the Lord.

225. If you know of people in the Family who are unbelievers, who have turned their back on the Word and Charter and who only seek to tear down what we're trying to build, then it's your duty to encourage them to move on, or recommend they be reclassified. Why would they want to live a life they don't believe in or agree with anyway? They should have enough strength of character to live what they believe instead of hiding behind some kind of excuse that they're going to use the structure of the Family to try to do some good. There are plenty

of places for someone to do good without having to subject themselves to our way of life and doctrines and religious beliefs and practices if they don't believe them! It just doesn't make sense to a thinking person!

226. Let me ask you: Would you want to face some kind of serious persecution with a half-hearted unbeliever by your side? Presently there is a Home in Mexico, some of whose members are in prison pending charges because of their witnessing. If that were you, who would you want by your side? Those who believe the Word and are willing to stand up for the truth and who have faith that God will deliver you? Or those who hate the Word, our doctrines, Peter and me, and everything we stand for? Think about it. It could happen to you.

227. ACCUSATION: The Letters teach that whoever doubts one teensy bit of the New Wine is in dire straits and will eventually doubt all the Letters, the Bible, Jesus, and God. To believe it all would involve becoming a mindless zombie and suspending all common sense, wisdom, discernment, and Scriptural concept of right and wrong.

228. (Mama:) Let's take a look at this. It seems that those who are trying to say that this is what the Letters teach are referring to the Letter "Believing Prophecy," which was published in 1997. However, this GN does not say that whoever doubts one teensy bit of the New Wine is going to, without fail, end up doubting everything, including the Bible, Jesus, and God.

229. The point this GN makes is that if you get into doubting and rejecting the prophecies published in the GN, and you don't cleanse yourself, ask for prayer, and receive the Lord's answers to your questions and doubts, then you are on the road that could possibly end up taking you to a place where you doubt it all. It doesn't happen to everyone, but it does happen to some. As the GN explains, there's a chain reaction that can be set off when you allow doubts to infiltrate your life, depending on

whether you give place to them or not.

230. The chain reaction is this: When you doubt the prophecies in the GNs, you doubt me; and then you'll end up doubting Dad, because he said I'd have his mantle and anointing; and if you feel Dad was wrong about that, then you'll conclude he could have been wrong about anything, so you eventually don't believe Dad's writings; and since Dad's writings and revelations are based on the Bible, then how can you believe the Bible?

231. I know of people who have walked that road, and it did lead them to stop believing in the Bible and God. It happens. But that doesn't mean that it happens in every case, nor does it mean that if you doubt one teensy bit of prophecy you'll lose your faith in God. However, if you have doubts along these lines and you don't do something to overcome them, then those doubts can do you serious spiritual damage. If your doubts lead you to rejecting the Word, mocking it or speaking against it, you are in serious spiritual trouble and you need help and prayer. The above-mentioned GN, like many others, is explaining the importance of faith and the dangers of doubt. Doubting the Word is serious business; it's one of the Devil's favorite weapons.

232. Jesus said in this GN: "The Enemy of your soul seeks to weaken and ultimately destroy you. His greatest weapon, his secret weapon, his most hidden weapon of today is his outright attack on prophecy. He has at last found a way that he can subtly attack My Word and get you to doubt it and even doubt Me, without your even realizing it" (ML #3130:78, Lifelines 24).

233. Warning the Family of the dangers of doubting the Word does not mean that Family members are obligated to take every single prophecy in the GNs and apply it to their situation blindly, "becoming a mindless zombie and suspending all common sense, wisdom, discernment, and Scriptural concept of right and wrong."

234. Here is an excerpt of a message from Dad from the above-mentioned GN on the difference between applying and rejecting prophecy.

235. (Dad speaking:) Of course, they need to understand that there are different types of prophecy, Honey. Some prophecy is divine revelation concerning spiritual matters or direction [for the Family] or Endtime events. Those messages the Lord expects His children to receive by faith, wholeheartedly, whether they understand them or not, trusting that with time they will become clearer.

236. But there are other kinds of prophecy, for encouragement and instruction in practical matters and in personal matters, where the Lord gives people a little leeway, and they can apply or not apply the prophecies as they fit their situation. But there is a big difference between not applying a prophecy and not believing a prophecy. There is a big difference between trying to see how the Words from the Lord fit your situation and how you can live them and use them and put them into practice, and downright rejecting, denying, and doubting the Words from the Lord.

237. When it comes to such prophecies, people do need and should be given flexibility. They don't need to get bound by the letter of the law and restricted, thinking they have to apply every single prophecy in the GN directly and rigidly to their situation. There must be some flexibility, some openness for them to be led of the Spirit according to their faith.

238. There is nothing wrong with this; this is being Spirit-led. This is applying prophecy. This is not doubting or being skeptical or mocking or criticizing prophecy. There's a big difference, and the Family needs to understand and know that difference so they can learn to rightly divide the Word and apply it and make it work in their situation without being bound and locked into the letter of the law, trying to apply God's Word in a black-and-white, inflexible, unloving manner.

239. That's where there's room for personal preference, personal choice, and being led of the Spirit according to your

situation and circumstances. And there is nothing wrong with that. But when you reject prophecy, doubt it, speak against it, mock it, and doubt the channels, and spread your doubts and thoughts to others, trying to get them to think the same way, this is wrong and this is dangerous. (ML #3130:114–118).

240. As you see from this excerpt (and from other portions of this GN if you take the time to read it in full), the problem is not in having difficulties with accepting or implementing a particular prophecy, or even choosing to put it on the back burner in your life, whether temporarily or for the long term. But you're entering dangerous territory when you mock the prophecies in the GNs, conclude they're only the thoughts of man, or determine that a message is wrong or a lie or not from the Lord. It makes matters worse if you start broadcasting your thoughts to others.

241. The "Believing Prophecy" GN does put forth the principle that once you doubt in one thing, it becomes easier to doubt in another. I think most people will agree that this is a sound concept, from personal experience. Once you get into a negative frame of mind, it usually continues, unless you actively do something to pull out of it. We in the Family have long taught that the seeds of doubt, like the seeds of bitterness, grow; they take hold if allowed to remain in your heart. It's a logical conclusion that once you begin to reject God's Word in any form, it could put you on the path that could lead to the point where you tell yourself, "If this thing can be wrong, then why isn't this thing and that thing and the other also wrong?" It's a chain reaction. I've seen this spiritual principle come to pass many times, haven't you?

242. ACCUSATION: The Family has been faulted for not protecting or promoting enough self-determination of children within the Family, so they could choose their own future without being overly pressured by their parents

to believe Family doctrine or choose a life as missionaries in the Family.

243. (Mama:) From the beginning we have hoped that our young people would choose to be full-time missionaries in the Family. It is a godly practice to train your children in Christian teachings. “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children” (Isa.54:13). “From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2Tim.3:15). It’s only in recent years that it has been looked upon with disdain if parents want their young people to hold the same religious beliefs that they do and actively train their children in such beliefs. For many earlier generations, that was the norm. In fact, if anyone did otherwise, it was considered irresponsible.

244. Dad originally gave us the vision that our young people are the hope of the future. Perhaps we were a little naïve or unrealistic or overly optimistic in thinking that all our young people would follow in their parents’ footsteps, and as they grew older and some decided to take another path in life, we had to learn how to cope with that. Yes, that was an adjustment for you parents, and there were some difficult times as you were quite heartbroken about it. That was a natural reaction, because you parents feel that serving the Lord in the Family is the best vocation. But you got over it, and with time we accepted that not all our children would continue in the Family. This was addressed very clearly in “When Teens Leave the Family” back in 1992, and has been emphasized repeatedly since then. (See ML #2942, Lifelines 21.)

245. It is completely false that Peter and I “adamantly oppose any self-determination for young people.” But to believe in self-determination does not mean that we have to quit training our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as we feel led. You parents in the Family are absolutely within your rights to give your children their spiritual training and feeding from Family publications, including the GNs that are appropriate for their age, MLKs, the Zine, Hope TKs, Blade, the LinkUp, the GV, and the Heaven’s

Library stories and books.

246. Just because you parents in the Family train your children to love the Lord and witness, and you do everything possible to prepare them to become missionaries, that doesn’t in any way mean that we have abandoned the truth that each young person has to make a personal choice as to whether to believe in Jesus and serve Him in the Family. In fact, because we realize the importance of self-determination, our senior teens were not required or even allowed to sign the Charter Membership contract. Even though they have voting rights under the Charter, we knew they were not prepared for such a monumental decision, but needed more time to be fully persuaded in their own minds before committing to the Family. “The Shakeup” says, “The Lord, Peter and I, and your shepherds and parents realize that you are facing big decisions in your life and we don’t want to pressure you to make a decision of total commitment before you’re ready. But the provisional contract does show clearly the standard of behavior that you will be required to uphold.

247. “We are not at this time expecting a full commitment from you senior teens to the fundamental Family beliefs nor to living as a full-time disciple in the Family. We and your parents and shepherds realize that you might need time to understand and fully accept some things about the Family doctrines, message or lifestyle. Signing the Provisional CM contract does not indicate that you are fully convinced about everything the Family stands for. You can sign the contract and still be undecided about some things” (ML #3257:147,148, GN 857).

248. It clearly states to the senior teens in the Provisional Charter Membership contract itself that “the signing of this contract does not signify that you have fully and completely accepted all Family beliefs and doctrines.” Does this sound like the approach of someone who is trying to coerce and manipulate young people?

249. Our children are trained primarily to be missionaries. When they decide they want to do something else, yes, they need to learn about a different lifestyle, one that is not communal and one that will require them to learn

new things and take on different responsibilities. This is similar to when kids leave home to go to college. Are those kids always perfectly prepared? No, of course not, because life is a learning experience, and most teenagers have a lot to learn, regardless of where or how they grew up. It takes time.

250. We continue to find better ways of helping our young people who choose to leave the Family adjust to their new careers, studies, living conditions, etc. This is a concern of all of us. We recently published three GNs on this subject—both counsel for parents as to how to best help their children, as well as an open letter to all young people who have left the Family or who are considering leaving. We pray this is a blessing to you, and we certainly pray for all of you parents and young people who find yourselves in this situation, that the Lord will lead you to a workable solution that will meet the needs of all involved. Please see “Take Me With You” and “They’ll Always Be Mine.” (ML #3299–3300, GN 898–900).

251. One of the underlying reasons why people are so adamantly opposed to the way we raise our children is not because the atmosphere of our Homes is not loving and good, or because the care they receive is inadequate, but because we’re training missionaries instead of encouraging our kids to be part of the System. I’m not ashamed of that, and you shouldn’t be either.

252. We’ll never convince secular folks or even uncommitted Christians that the life and lifestyle of a missionary is the greatest thing in the world. To us, it’s something that makes a difference for eternity; souls saved and lives changed last forever! Everything else will pass away, but what’s accomplished for Jesus and the lives touched by Him endure. That’s our reason for life as missionaries—the bottom line.

253. To unbelievers or those who may be saved but barely know the Lord, this sort of belief is religious extremism, fundamentalist fanaticism, and they think it’s bad enough that we believe it ourselves, much less teach it to our children. Their bottom line is that the life of a missionary is not all that important, that there

are lots of other useful skills we could teach our children, or which we could at least be open to them learning, without going on all the time about this “saving souls” business. Or we could at least help them get “proper training” as a clergyman if they want to do it properly.

254. See, if you were all dedicated to raising your children to become teachers or firemen, architects, engineers or geologists, you wouldn’t hear a peep out of most people. There’d hardly be any objection at all. But when you talk about training them to become missionaries—especially ones in the Family, where they live communally, share all things, exist by faith, and practice what outsiders regard as religious extremism, that’s when the sparks really fly!

255. Okay, bearing in mind the fact that you won’t convince many of your accusers, here are a few points which articulate the Family’s stance on these matters, which you can share with those who are honestly seeking the truth, or who are at least reasonably objective:

❶ We hope and pray our children will become missionaries, but they’re free to follow whatever path in life they choose. Hundreds have chosen other paths over the years, and our love, thoughts and prayers go with them.

257. Like all parents, we want our kids to follow in our footsteps. Many parents hope their kids will become part of the family business. We do too. A doctor often hopes his child will become a doctor to benefit from his wisdom and continue his profession. We regard ourselves as soul doctors, no matter how we’re regarded by others, and we practice spiritual healing. It’s a helping profession, and one which we believe has eternal consequences.

258. But if our children don’t want to follow that path, they’re free to take another. In fact, if they don’t want to, we’d really prefer that they take another path rather than remaining in the Family just to please us, their parents, or to go along with their friends.

259. If they’re not here for the right reasons, they should be elsewhere, and we’ve told them that over the years, including a couple of times recently. In “The Shakeup,” we asked our

people—all of them, young and old—to honestly evaluate their lives for the Lord. If they don't want to live up to the standard of full-time Charter Membership, then they can become part-time members, Fellow Members. If they don't have a desire for that level of membership either, then they can simply be friends or acquaintances of the Family. The decision is theirs alone to make, and there shouldn't be any stigma attached to those who decide to leave—just as they shouldn't try to place any stigma on those who decide to stay.

260. I've also recently written a Letter to our departing young people expressing our love and concern for them, "Take Me With You." Peter and I felt it was important to encourage them that we love them and care for them no matter what they choose to do. Our love for our children is unconditional, just as the Lord's love for us is unconditional. They're still our children, no matter what, and we'll help them all we can.

261. Life in the Family is voluntary, just as it always has been. We respect the rights and freedom of those who choose another path; others should respect ours.

② What may seem like "pressure" to others is simply part of the lifestyle of a religious community, as many religious scholars will tell you. Do our children study religious books and writings and even memorize parts of the Bible? Yes, but so do the children of many other religious believers around the world.

263. Are our children schooled at home in many countries around the world? Yes, for a variety of reasons, just like the well over one million children in America alone who are schooled at home. Religious believers have often sought to teach their own children, and the courts in many countries have generally respected that right. Look at the Amish in the U.S. They fought their case all the way up to the Supreme Court, and they have the right to stop schooling completely after the age of 16.

264. Do our children take part in our religion, even from an early age? Yes, just like the children of many Orthodox Jews, Muslims,

Catholics, and other religions or denominations. Our children generally love to sing and dance and put on performances, to tell others about their faith and pass out Gospel literature, and to help others who are doing so. If they don't want to do that sort of thing, they don't have to, but they're still subject to their parents until they're of legal age, just like any other child in the world.

265. Part of the involvement of our children in our religion stems from the fact that our houses are also our churches. We live and work and minister in the same place, and since our children are raised there, they see it and experience it on a daily basis. They're there as we're giving Bible classes; they're there as we talk to lonely students, unhappy businessmen, or needy housewives; they're there when we make calls to gather support for our work; they go with us when we travel from place to place to preach the Gospel. How can we separate our children from our lives?

③ Our children are free to follow whatever path they want, as I said. But I won't deny that we regard the life of a missionary as the best possible profession and we hope that many of them choose that path—as thousands of them have. They were not coerced into it, forced to do so, or indoctrinated into becoming missionaries. They're missionaries because they want to be, because they feel it's God's calling for them. And they're free to leave whenever they feel otherwise.

267. But while they're here, they generally find great fulfillment in the fact that they're truly helping people. In imparting salvation to others, they're giving them eternal life in Heaven. In helping others through their problems and difficulties, they change their earthly life for the better. In performing and working at orphanages, old folks' homes and refugee camps, they brighten the lives of people who have very little hope or faith. In helping out with disaster relief and humanitarian aid projects, they pass on desperately needed supplies and encouragement at the same time.

268. We believe we're making a difference in the world, and we're not ashamed to say so

and to promote it. If our children don't choose to follow, we're naturally saddened by the fact, but we realize that everyone has to make his or her own choice. We believe in freedom of choice and only ask that others respect our choices and religious beliefs as we do theirs.

269. ACCUSATION: Our accusers say that our "strange doctrines" are causing the Family to not bear fruit; that Family members don't want to win others to a movement with such bizarre beliefs as the "Loving Jesus" revelation.

270. (Mama:) If that is the case with any of you, I'm really sorry. I'm sorry that you're intimidated by others' opinions and afraid you'll blow your friends and contacts away if you were to teach or explain to them some of our more radical beliefs. I can see how you might feel that way, but I also know that there are many who do not feel that way. There are brethren who are teaching their converts about hearing from the Lord in prophecy, hearing from Dad and other departed spirits, the Scriptural foundation of the Law of Love, and the concept of loving Jesus as His bride. In some countries of Latin America, where they have a thriving follow-up ministry, many of their live-out members have embraced Loving Jesus intimately, to varying degrees.

271. Peter and I do not tailor the Lord's Word that we receive and publish for the Family to what will be generally accepted by the vast majority outside the Family. We publish what the Lord gives us for you, and then trust that the Lord will bring along sheep who are hungry spiritually and new bottle enough to also believe the Word! The Lord is going to increase our numbers and enlarge our base church through the *Activated* ministry, but that increase will hopefully be of believers, those who follow the doctrine—not just weak members who don't know anything about our beliefs and who have no conviction about the Family.

272. In training new believers and converts, we believe in presenting all our beliefs, even

though little by little, Letter by Letter, precept upon precept. That's why we have prepared an entire collection of material for those who subscribe to the *Activated* program, which can also be used by those you're witnessing to and feeding personally even if they are not part of the *Activated* program. New believers need to be brought along in their faith step by step, like Paul said: "You have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not strong meat" (Heb.5:12). It's not wise or loving to stumble babes with strong meat. But that's not to say that we should never introduce new members to our radical beliefs. The goal is to help each one become a follower of the teaching at whatever level each has the faith for.

273. Here's a message from the Lord on this that I pray will increase your faith:

274. (Jesus speaking:) I told My accusers, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory: but he that seeks His glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." These words are just as true today as they were when I was accused of healing on the Sabbath. That was just as much of an anathema to people in those days as My doctrine of loving Me intimately is to people today.

275. Those who do these things know the truth. They know what good fruit it bears and they're not ashamed of it. On the other hand, there are those who hold back, who are ashamed, who fear the opinions of man. There are those who don't win others because they're ashamed of our private doctrines. But again I say, if you do these things, you will know if this doctrine be of man or if it be of God. Those who partake fully of My love will testify of the fruit and great blessings that have been bestowed in their lives—the miraculous changes that have taken place in their hearts and minds, the closeness to the spirit world they've obtained, and the blessings in the material world they've experienced.

They know this doctrine is of God, and they're unashamed and testify of it.

276. I knew this would be a hard saying for many, and it is hard to grasp the spiritual principles, especially for the men, when it goes so contrary to the physical. But it's no harder to accept than it was for the people of My day to accept the doctrine of eating My flesh and drinking My blood. At the time, I knew when I presented the doctrine of Myself being the living bread of life, and when I said, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," that many would balk at that.

277. That doctrine was strong meat, and many of My disciples walked no more with Me. Even My most loyal ones, when I asked if they would also go back, answered with hesitation. But because they had been with Me, they decided to trust Me, and they partook. And when they did, they knew that what I had said was true, and it empowered them. It wasn't easy for them to understand at the time, but now all My children everywhere partake of communion. It's one of the cornerstones of Christianity. Some do it more than others. Some do it one way and some another, but they all partake of My body and My blood, and it's no longer a hard saying.

278. This doctrine of loving Me intimately is no different. If you will partake of it, you will know whether it be of God or whether it be of man. I have said over and over that it's a private, personal thing, an intimate relationship between My precious brides and Me. Some of My brides are freer and use more explicit words than others, which I bless. But I also bless those who use less explicit words. It doesn't matter exactly what words you use. There are as many ways to express love words to Me as I have brides. But no matter what words they say, if they will partake of the doctrine, they will experience the blessings, both spiritually and physically. For the blessings are real, which they will find out and see clearly if they will not hold back.

279. The best way to answer your accusers is to say, as I said: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or not." (*End of message from Jesus.*)

280. ACCUSATION: Some say the Family has a fruitful ministry, good CTPs, good tools for reaching the world, etc., but that none of the fruit we bear has anything to do with the Letters. The Family members are wonderful, the Homes are a haven of peace and love, but the Word, doctrines and leaders are evil.

281. (Mama:) Can an evil tree bring forth good fruit, or can a good tree bring forth evil fruit? No! That's why the Word says, "By their fruits ye shall know them!" (Mat. 7:18–20).

282. It's the same old accusation that they hit Dad with. "The results are good, the fruit is good, the Family is wonderful, and their missionary work is excellent, but Father David—he is wicked, seedy, evil, manipulative, and a megalomaniac!" Remember when Dad got down and discouraged about this, feeling bad about himself, and then, clear as ever, his dear mother came to him in the spirit and said, "Son, the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life!" He was his mother's fruit, a tree of life to multitudes through his words and deeds. And you're a tree of life too, and have borne good fruit—new life for millions whom you've preached the Gospel to and gotten saved.

283. That was the answer then and that's the answer now! Despite the mudslinging of those who are disgruntled or bitter, the Family's fruit only increases. Your fruit, your work, is only growing! It's blossoming! And now you have *Activated* and all the wonderful new materials that are coming of that new push!

284. Why do you think you have this fruit? It's because of the sap! It's because of the Word! Why aren't other Christians, those with just the Bible or their own church materials, doing the same? Why aren't they reaching as many countries as the Family? Why are there so few actual missionaries compared to the many church-going Christians? How is it that our missionaries are still going strong at an age when their church-Christian counterparts are seriously thinking about retirement? It's because of the New Wine that the Lord poured out to Dad, and now to Peter and me.

285. The New Wine might look like the water in the Letter “Strange Truths”—it might have all kinds of funny-looking creatures in it that worry people, doctrines like Loving Jesus, hearing from the Lord in prophecy about everything, hearing from departed spirits, and so on. But you who have drunk of the waters in faith, who have swum in the waters, know that these waters give you the strength and the power to preach the Gospel.

286. To deny the power of the Word is like someone going to an oasis in the middle of the desert and saying, “These palm trees are wonderful, and the dates are delicious, and the greenery is lush, but look at this spring! I’ve never seen water like this before, so it must be dangerous! It must be deadly! Let’s fill in the spring with sand! Let’s do away with this evil spring! This oasis is wonderful; let’s just get rid of this strange spring of water and it will be perfect!” But you see, what they don’t understand is that the oasis is merely the fruit of the spring of water!

287. If they were wise, smart, and honest, they would realize that the spring is a thing of beauty and life—that even though they don’t have the faith to drink from it themselves, even though they can’t see themselves swimming in it, and even though they would rather not be around it, this wonderful oasis which they marvel at, and this fruit that feeds the hungry travelers that pass by, are a direct result of this spring!

288. Read “Strange Truths” and “The Tree”! Dad said it 25 years ago and it’s still the truth today! (See ML #319, 360.)

289. ACCUSATION: A couple of former members who have taken psychological examinations have been assessed as having “footprints on their backs.” That apparently indicates that they’ve been stepped on and put down. These former members concluded that all Family members are beaten down.

290. (Peter:) Many people are really wowed by any assessment from the department of psy-

chology, no matter how incomplete, and they think, “Oh, if they say it’s true, then of course it has to be true!” But we know that’s not necessarily the case. People of this profession are not always basing their judgments or measures or conclusions on sound standards—certainly not on the standard of the Scripture. How, then, can we put their findings into proper perspective? In praying about it, the Lord has given us some insight into these psychological evaluations.

291. While it’s probably true that some former members would be assessed as having this type of emotional “footprint,” if psychologists and social scientists were to study a group of 100 men, women, and children taken from diverse cultures and backgrounds around the world, they would most likely find a much greater percentage of people who have been “kept down,” so to speak—emotionally, mentally, and spiritually—than they would from assessing an equal number of random people who have at any time received Family training and instruction.

292. Another point to keep in mind is that many worldly psychologists and therapists have very erroneous and negative mindsets when it comes to basic spiritual principles, especially concerning Christian teachings and doctrines that are based on humility, faith and love. Because they’re already prejudiced against the things of the Spirit, it’s common for them to misdiagnose spiritual conditions such as humility and selflessness, mistaking them instead as evidence of emotional abuse and abasement. Because they’re specifically looking for these types of “markings” in the psychological make-up of former “cult” members, they will most likely find them. These types of evaluations are not scientific; they’re merely baseless accusations, similar to what has been proven to be the case with supposed “repressed memory syndrome,” which in recent years has become a common misdiagnosis by certain therapists and psychologists who have gone so far as to mistakenly induce false memories in the minds of those who have come to them for help.

293. While it’s true that some Family members have had emotionally upsetting experi-

ences—either with their peers, their parents, their spouses, or those who were in a position of leadership—this is also true of the vast majority of people from all walks of life the world over.

294. So while it is true that being a member of the Family doesn't guarantee a life free from problems, misunderstandings, and even hurtful, wrong and unloving actions on the part of some, the average Family member can expect to have far less of these types of sad and unfortunate occurrences than the average member of society at large, who must unfortunately learn to deal with them on almost a daily basis.

295. While most business leaders are concerned primarily with economic profit and material advancement, the leadership of the Family is constantly striving to become more like Christ, living in His love and following His sample. Not only that, but the Biblical teachings, communal lifestyle, and shepherding structure of the Family also provide a means of support and an atmosphere of faith and trust that help its members to cope much more easily with adversity and with the personal conflicts that naturally arise from living and working together. This is something that most people in the world do not have the opportunity to enjoy.

296. The idea that anyone would leave the Family, feeling that they had been walked on, put down, or mistreated in any way by any of its members, either openly or indirectly, is totally contrary to the goals and teachings of the Family, and abhorrent to those who are striving to lead the Family in the nurture and admonition of God's Word. From the earliest days of the Family, Dad taught in countless Letters of instruction that all things must be done in love, and that without love nothing else matters. Love has been the guiding force behind every major decision and every major move and policy change that has been put forth by the Family since its inception—first of all, love for God and obedience to His Word, and second of all, love for others in whatever way or form it was needed.

297. Time and time again, the principles of love, patience, humility, and understanding have been emphasized through the teachings

of Dad and Mama. Countless Letters have been published for the purpose of Family instruction, which have expounded on the importance of and the need for these qualities in anyone who is in a position of leadership within the Family. “Baby the Babes,” “Love Never Fails,” “Prayer for Love and Mercy,” “The Greatest of These Is Love,” “Love Covers a Multitude of Sins,” “Love Is the Most Important Thing.” These have been some of the basic foundation Letters of the Family, and the list of Letters goes on and on. Nothing has changed over the years in this regard. If anything, the importance of love has become an even more central part of every Family teaching and practice.

298. Although it seems to be a fairly common problem of human nature in every country and culture around the world for bosses to berate their employees, husbands and wives to criticize their spouses, and even loving parents to sometimes put down and demean their children physically or verbally, this is not accepted behavior within Family Homes and communities. The Family believes in love, and has even been criticized because of the great lengths to which many of our members are willing to go in order to share God's love with others. Though the sacrificial and longsuffering type of love that the Bible teaches isn't something that comes naturally to most human beings, it's still the kind of love that the Family as a whole is striving to live.

299. Over the years there have been situations and instances in which individual members of the Family have acted in ways that were unloving and not according to the godly principles of Biblical teachings. But when situations such as these have come to light, those involved have consistently been encouraged to confess their faults and mistakes, ask for prayer and forgiveness from those who've been hurt, and to do everything within their power to change and to learn to treat others in a more loving and humble manner.

300. Likewise, when it has become clear that Family policy or Scriptural teaching has in some way inadvertently been used as an excuse for unloving and unchristian behavior

amongst Family members, we as its leadership have done our best to put a stop to these actions, and when necessary, to apologize for the circumstances, and even for the policies themselves that could have been used in the wrong way and therefore involuntarily caused hurt on the part of some.

301. In the world at large, it's sadly not uncommon to have a boss or manager, or even a parent or spouse, who consistently behaves in a proud, unloving, or overbearing manner; it's just a fact of life. Normally, when a person has problems with those he lives and works with, it's not thought of as something that's so out of the ordinary. It's just natural, something that one must learn to deal with and make the best of. But within the Family, it has been a common practice from the beginning to remove from Family leadership any persons who have been found to consistently operate in an unloving manner.

302. If this has truly been the case, however, you ask why some former Family members who have taken psychological examinations have been assessed as having "footprints on their backs"—that is, that they've been stepped on and put down. If that is true, it's very sad indeed. But consider this. Of the tens of thousands of people around the world who have at one time regarded themselves as Family members, not to mention the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, who have been influenced by Family teachings, what percentage of those would consider themselves as being hurt or psychologically marked in a negative way by the Family? And how would that percentage compare to the number of non-Family or secular members of society at large who would consider themselves as having been mistreated by their superiors or "walked on" by their own parents, employers, spouses, or others in society?

303. So in conclusion, although the psychological assessments of some of the Family's former members may appear to be negative in some respects, in order to have a complete idea of what those evaluations represent, the findings made by those few psychologists must be put into perspective by comparing them to the findings of other social scientists who have ex-

tensively studied the mental condition of the Family as a whole, as well as by comparing them to the mental and emotional "markings" that would inevitably be found by assessing the average member of society as a whole.

(Note: See also "Psychological Seduction: The Failure of Modern Psychology," Christian Digest #6.)

It's Time to Choose!

304. (Mama:) The Lord is looking for fighters. He's trying to make each of us strong. Why do you think He allows us to experience this challenge to our faith?

305. This is a time of choice and commitment, a time of sifting and purging. It's the beginning of the era of action, and the Lord is testing and trying each one. Everyone has to choose sides and make a definite stand and commitment, and both the Lord and the Devil have made their presentations, their cases, so to speak. They've presented their evidence, and now the choice rests with each individual as to who they will believe.

306. I'm very sorry for those of you who have had to hear tirades or read letters from disgruntled former members, or even hear those negative stories or statements second or third-hand, because it's very draining spiritually; it's depressing. And despite the fact that often these accusations and claims do not accurately reflect what happened, or at best reflect a little bit of truth with a whole lot of twisting, misconception, and exaggeration, your faith can still be weakened and hurt, and you can find yourself battling doubts and discouragement if you don't get prayer and deep prolonged cleansing from the Word.

307. Peter and I want you to make it. With our explanations in this GN of how it's not right for unbelievers to hang around in the Family, we weren't talking to those of you who believe or who want to believe but who are struggling. If you love the Lord, the Family, the Word, Peter and me and our mission in life, then fight for your place. Hang on! Seek the Lord and go on the attack. Don't let these lies get the best of you!

308. The only way to keep yourself from being weakened by hearing the Enemy's doubts through these avenues is to keep your face turned toward the light. Ask for prayer if you've been subject to such negative comments and doubts. Ask the Lord to speak to you about your questions, and receive the answers He gives in faith. Put your trust in the Lord over man. Look at the fruit of the Word, and the fruit it's borne in your own life. Don't let the Enemy pull you off the wall or cause you to turn your face away from the light. Soak in the Word and study it. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. Ask the Lord to help you to see things as He sees them, and to be able to lay aside your carnal mind and receive the things of the spirit.

309. If you battle critical thoughts or tend to be analytical, have prayer to understand the spiritual principles the Family is based on. If you look at the situation in the flesh, then you may be pulled down, discouraged and weakened. But if you believe the Lord and His Word, then you can shield yourself from such attacks of the Enemy, and remain strong, full of light, and able to help others and rescue them from the darkness. That's our main job and our calling! So don't let the Enemy trip you up with carnal reasoning and his sinister plot to pull you off the wall.

310. It's your choice, and it's time to choose: Will you believe the Lord's Words or the words of man? Which will stand up in the final judgment?

311. We don't want anyone to feel pressured to remain in the Family, or to be unhappy serving the Lord with us. You are free to go whenever and wherever you feel the Lord is leading you! But if you know that the Lord is calling you to be one of His disciples within the Family, then we're glad to have you, and count it a privilege to work alongside you!

Much love in our wonderful Husband and Giver of Life, Mama and Peter

312. P.S. If you have read any of these negative letters or Web sites, here is a simple-to-follow list of things that you should do to be cleansed.

313. ○ Go to your shepherd, mate, parent or someone who is spiritually strong right away and let them know that you've read some of this anti-Family rhetoric. Whether you feel it has affected you or not, don't wait until you can determine this yourself. Assume that you have been or will be affected, and realize that it's important to nip it in the bud by getting help. Humbling yourself before someone and admitting you need help is an important first step.

314. ○ Realize the seriousness of this attack, and pray desperately for your spiritual protection and that no root of doubts and confusion will grow in your heart.

315. ○ Ask for prayer, at least from your shepherds, and from the Home if necessary, if the Lord shows you that united prayer is in order. Again, whether or not you feel it's necessary, you need the power of prayer to wash you clean of the Enemy's lies and half-truths.

316. ○ Take some time to come before the Lord personally and ask for His counsel, instruction, encouragement, and answers. Let Him speak to you directly. Open your heart and mind and tongue to receive whatever He has to give you. His personal words and promises will be a key to victory.

317. ○ If you have questions, if there are things that you've read that have caused you specific battles, doubts, or have confused you in some way, bring these specific questions before the Lord. Also share these things with your shepherds and, if you don't have a developed gift of prophecy yourself or if you'd like to get a confirmation or further clarification on the things you received, ask your shepherd or someone who's spiritually strong and has the gift of prophecy to pray and hear from the Lord for you.

318. ○ Take a mega-dose of the Word. You should be getting good Word time every day anyway, but at a time when the Enemy is launching a serious attack against your faith, you need it more than ever. No matter what's happening, take a good hour and a half to two hours daily to read the Word and hear from the Lord personally.

319. ○ Read through the reading list of key Letters that follows. It may take some time,

but you don't have to finish it quickly. It can be an ongoing project. Even those who haven't been reading the accusations of disgruntled former members or having interaction with them should try to read through this list to strengthen your faith for the times when you will have to face such things.

Letter Links

- "Mountain Men!" (ML #B, Volume 1).
- "There Are No Neutrals" (ML #F, Volume 1).
- "For God's Sake, Follow God" (ML #4, Volume 1).
- "Did God Make a Mistake?" (ML #35, Volume 1).
- "Flatlanders!" (ML #57, Volume 1).
- "Judas!" (ML #71, Volume 1).
- "Old Bottles" (ML #242, Volume 2).
- "Come On Ma!—Burn Your Bra!" (ML #286, Volume 2).
- "The Law of Love" (ML #302C, Volume 3).
- "The Tree" (ML #319, Volume 3).
- "Strange Truths" (ML #360, Volume 3).
- "Holy Ghosts" (ML #620, Volume 5).
- "The Spirit World" (ML #622, Volume 5).
- "Grace vs. Law!" (ML #635, Volume 5).
- "When I'm Gone" (ML #706, Volume 6).
- "The Four Deadly Sins—The DDDDB! Will You Doubt, Disobey, Deny and Betray?" (ML # 759, Volume 6).
- "Dad's Christmas Message!" (ML #954-8, Volume 8).
- "The Word" (ML #1089, Volume 9).
- "False Accusers in the Last Days!" (ML #2820, DB 11).
- "Faith Cometh by Hearing the Word!" (ML #2821, Lifelines 20).
- "Beware of Bitterness" (ML #2840, Lifelines 20).
- "Overcoming the Past" (ML #2877, Lifelines 21).
- "The Love Charter" (ML #2963, Lifelines 22).
- "An Answer to Him That Asketh Us" (ML #3016, Lifelines 22).

- "Loving Jesus, Parts 1 and 2" (ML #3024–25, Lifelines 22).
- "Prophecies on Doubts" (ML #3041, Lifelines 23).
- "Communicating with Heavenly Messengers!" (ML #3048, Lifelines 23).
- "The Loving Jesus Revelation" (ML #3077, Lifelines 23).
- "Crisis of Faith, Parts 1–3" (ML #3088–90, Lifelines 23).
- "Believing Prophecy" (ML #3130, Lifelines 24).
- "The Benefits of the Family" (ML #3172, GN 777).
- "Living the Lord's Law of Love—Part 1" (ML #3201, Lifelines 25).
- "The End of a Millennium" (ML #3291, GN 884).
- The Family Activity Reports—over 130 issues!



"By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the Destroyer" (Psa. 17:4).

Scholarly Studies on the Family

Here's a sampling of some of the recent books, papers and articles on the Family by academics and scholars, available at libraries, bookstores, or on the Internet:

Available in English:

- a) *Sex, Slander and Salvation. Investigating the Family/Children of God* by James R. Lewis and Gordon Melton, Editors, Center for Academic Publications, Stanford, California, 1994. Excerpted edition available on the Web at: www.thefamily.org/dossier/index.html
- b) *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, by Gordon Melton (entry on The Family).
- c) *The Sociology of Religious Movements* by William Sims Bainbridge, published by Routledge in 1997, with a chapter on the Family entitled: The Family (Children of God).

- d) *Children in New Religions*, edited by Susan Palmer and Charlotte E. Hardman, published by Rutgers University Press in 1999. Chapters on or pertaining to the Family:
 * “Social Control of New Religions: From ‘Brainwashing’ Claims to Child Sex Abuse Accusations” by Dr. James T. Richardson.
 * “The Precarious Balance Between Freedom of Religion and the Best Interests of the Child” by Michael W. Homer.
 * “Children of a Newer God: The English Courts, Custody Disputes, and NRMs,” by Anthony Bradney.
 * “The Ethics of Children in Three New Religions” by Charlotte E. Hardman.
- e) *New Religious Movements, A Practical Introduction*, by Eileen Barker, published in 1989 in London by Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, has references to the Family throughout.
- f) *‘Brainwashing’ Claims and Minority Religions Outside the United States: Cultural Diffusion of a Questionable Concept in the Legal Arena*, by Dr. James T. Richardson. Published by Brigham Young University Law Review in 1997.
- g) *Field Notes: The Family/Children of God Under the Love Charter*, by John Bozeman. Published in *Novo Religio—The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, Volume 2, Number 1, October 1998. Available on the MO Web site.
- h) Psychiatrist Lee Coleman’s declaration regarding the Family, available on the MO Web site.
- i) “The Family in Religious Context,” a paper by J. Gordon Melton, available on the MO Web site.
- j) “The Family, Sex, and the Law of Love,” by J. Gordon Melton, available on the MO Web site.
- k) “Summary of the Psychiatric Evaluation of The Family” by Hugh Polk. Performed June 20, 1995, available on the MO Web site.
- l) Upcoming book by William Sims Bainbridge, hopefully published in 2000 or 2001.
- m) *Life in The Family: An Oral History of The Children of God*, by James T. Chancellor, published by Syracuse University Press, coming out in September 2000.
- n) Address by Ramsey Clark to the National Council of Churches in 1994, entitled “The Plight of *The Family* Around the World.” On the Family Web site in the Dossier section.
- o) Paper on sects in Argentina, with analysis of Argentine persecution by Argentine anthropologist Alejandro Frigerio, “The Invasion of the Sects: Cult Controversies in the Mass Media in Argentina (1985–1995).”
- p) Paper by Massimo Introvigne, published in *Syzygy* journal in 1997: “The Mormon Transition of 1890 and the Family’s Transition of the 1990s: Parallels and Unparallels.”
- q) *Sects, Cults and Alternative Religions* by David V. Barrett contains a comprehensive chapter on the Family. (David Barrett is associated with the INFORM office based at the London School of Economics.) Published in 1996 by Blandford A. Cassell; an updated version will be published soon. (ISBN 0-7137-2567-2).

Internet References to the Family:

- r) Sociology professor Jeff Hadden has one of the largest, most respected Web sites on religion, religious studies and religious

- tolerance issues. He has a comprehensive page on the Family which can be accessed at: <http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~jkh8x/soc257/nrms/Family.html>
- s) Massimo Introvigne also has a comprehensive page on the Family, mostly covering our court cases from A to Z, as well as a history breakdown. This can be accessed at: www.cesnur.org/testi/TheFamily/se_thefamily.htm
- Massimo also posted there his analysis of our victory in the French court case, which is entitled, “The Family Vindicated by French Court—‘Catastrophe’ for the Anti-cult Movement ADFI and the Governmental ‘Mission to Fight Cults.’”
- Massimo’s site also has a lot of very interesting academic materials on brainwashing and other religious liberty issues, such as the French parliamentary report and other European religious liberty issues.
- t) Larry Lilliston’s paper on Children in the Family, “Psychological Assessment of Children in ‘The Family,’” published in *Sex, Slander and Salvation*, is also posted on the Web at: www.psywww.com/psyrelig/family.htm.
- u) Human Rights Without Frontiers (an independent organization with links to the International Helsinki Foundation) has compiled an up-to-date analysis of the Family, posted at: www.hrwf.net/English/the_family99.html
- b) An in-depth analysis of the Argentine Appeals Court ruling published in a book edited by Hector Ruiz Nunez, entitled: “Jueces y Periodistas, Como se Informa y Como se Juzga.” (*Judges and the Media: How they are informed and how they judge*). The chapter on the Family (Niños de Dios) was written by Dr. Horacio Prack (the judge who penned the Appeals Court ruling), Dra. Maria del Carmen Traficante, and Dr. Pablo Talamoni.
- c) An in-depth analysis of the Family’s victories in the courts of Barcelona was written by academic Agustin Motilla, published in the *Anuario de Derecho Eclesiastico del Estado*, Vol. IX (1993). Its title is “Grupos Marginales y Libertad Religiosa: Los Nuevos Movimientos Religiosos Ante Los Tribunales de Justicia.” (*Marginal Groups and Religious Liberty: New Religious Movements and the Judicial Courts.*)
- d) Elio Masferrer edited a book with three chapters on the Family. The book is titled “Sectas o Iglesias: Viejos o Nuevos Movimientos Religiosos” (*Cults or Churches: Old and New Religious Movements*). The chapters on the Family are: “La Familia, Hermandad de Comunidades Misioneras Cristianas,” written by the Mexican Media Team, Ben and Maria. The next is by Isabel Lagarriga Attias, “Los Niños de Dios y La Familia, del Hipismo a la Comunidad Religiosa” (Children of God and the Family, from Hippyism to Religious Community). The last chapter is by Elio Masferrer Kan, entitled, “De los Niños de Dios a la Familia, Dinamica de un Nuevo Movimiento Religioso” (From the Children of God to the Family, dynamic of a new religious movement.)

Available in Spanish:

- a) Book by J. Gordon Melton, published by Ediciones Paulinas in 1999: “Niños de Dios: Secta o Movimiento Religioso ‘The Family’?” (Published by Elle Di Ci in Italian in 1997. To be published in English in 2000.)