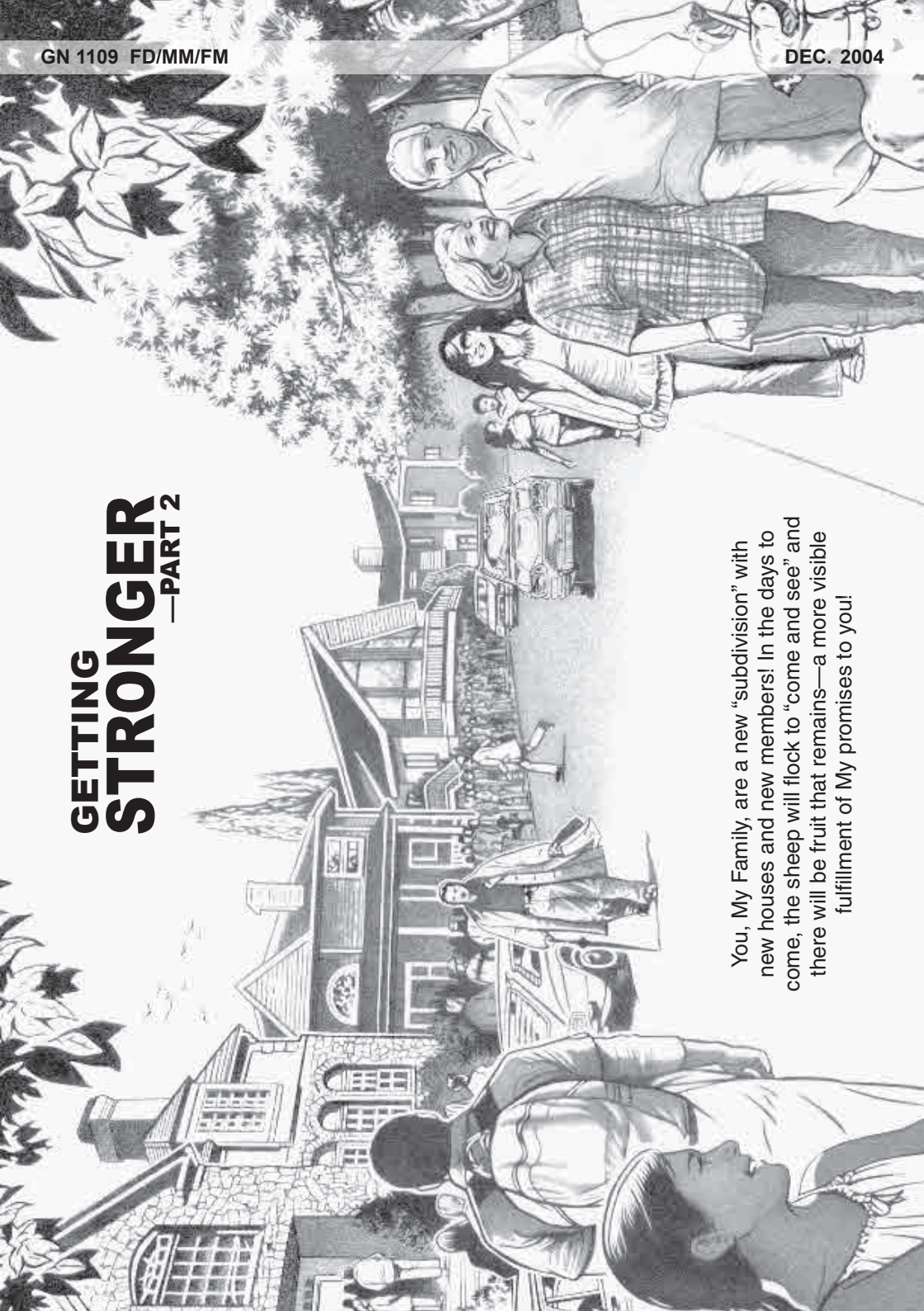


# GETTING STRONGER

—PART 2



You, My Family, are a new “subdivision” with new houses and new members! In the days to come, the sheep will flock to “come and see” and there will be fruit that remains—a more visible fulfillment of My promises to you!

# Getting Stronger—Part 2

## Preparing for the Year of Strengthening

By Peter

FD/MM/FM 3518 11/04

### Contents

• What's different about the year of strengthening?.....	2
• Why a new shepherding program for 2005 .....	4
• The new coach program.....	7
• Coach program built on mentoring, not visitation .....	11
• Coach Training Program 2005.....	12
• Being “weaned” from the care of the Vs.....	13
• New structure for the Home teamwork.....	15
• Summary of principles and where we're at today .....	20
• Is this too much, too fast?.....	22
• Members of the Steering Council should work as equals.....	26
• Clarifications regarding board criteria monitors .....	27
• Senior teens as criteria monitors .....	28
• Boards and the criteria monitors.....	29
• Differentiating between the spiritual and the practical.....	30
• Training the managers too.....	30
• Coaches and the board structure .....	30
• Home size: Don't stop building your winning team .....	32
• Timing of Home elections—March 2005.....	33
• Who to elect as your Home shepherds .....	34
• Home shepherds and Home accountability .....	34
• Why more spiritual shepherding? .....	35
• Spiritual shepherding is a ministry.....	39
• The first Home review.....	41
• A special anointing for the year of strengthening.....	42

Dear Family,

**M**AMA and I love each one of you very much, and we are thankful and excited to be heading into the year of strengthening together with you. Year 2005 promises to be a tremendous year full of change and progress. Praise the Lord!

**2. We have made a lot of structural changes to the Family, and thankfully, we're pretty much on target as far as the restructuring timetable that was set at Summit 2003.** We're already seeing a lot of good fruit from the

changes and we pray you're feeling the good effects. We recently asked the Lord about how He looks at the year of strengthening. We felt that surely it must be different in many ways from the year of restructuring; it will bring different challenges, and our Husband undoubtedly has special promises for us as we enter this time. Here is His challenging and inspiring message:

### What's different about the year of strengthening?

**3. (Jesus:) The year of strengthening will be a wonderful time, My dear brides.** During the year of restructuring the Family “subdivision” has undergone extensive renovation—the roads have been widened and the potholes have been filled, new houses have been built for new categories of membership, parks and recreation areas have been created so that there could be more of a focus on your children and young people, the subdivision has been beautified with more trees and ponds and fountains and flowers to make it more homey and pleasant for the residents, and it's a more wonderful place to live and work in so many ways!

**4. Each of the present houses has been renewed as well—**the houses of your spirits have undergone extensive renovation through the renewal, tossing out the old ways of thinking and acting, the old System input, and being made new and fresh and clean. Now, as you all join together to form new Homes and winning teams, you can truly be Homes of hearts—not just new Homes, but new Homes with new people inwardly and outwardly, with renewed desires to live in peace and harmony and do your utmost to win the world for Me.

**5. You've come through a lot to make it to this point, and it's been a lot of work as well.** Construction work is always tiring and difficult, because there's generally some tearing down of

the old before the new can be built or renovated. It's been a taxing and strenuous year, I know, and even now there are still improvements going on to parts of your subdivision, changes that will continue to happen for some time to come.

**6. But stop for a moment, look around you, count your blessings, and let Me tell you what lies ahead of you this year.** Although work remains and change continues (for these things are always with you), there's a lot to be thankful for and a lot to look forward to.

**7. In the past months as you've all worked together on making your subdivision a better place to live,** you've established new bonds and links of love with your co-workers, the rest of your Home, and the Family at large. You've labored side by side to get the work done, bearing each other's burdens, praying for each other in your moments of weakness and need, rejoicing in each other's victories, caring for each other's children and young people when the need arose, sacrificing for each other and for the good of the Family as a whole. Having gone through all of this together has brought you closer, for you've fought the good fight together, endured hardship together, and laid down your lives for each other. You are more united, more appreciative of each other, and can live together with more love and harmony.

**8. The time of the renewal has changed you too.** It was not easy for some; it was a sudden, sharp shock for some who had been growing dependent on certain forms of System input for their form of relaxation and happiness, so there were some withdrawal symptoms at first as you went "cold turkey." But now you've been through that, you've passed through detoxification to rid you of System addictions and have come through rehab successfully, and you're new creatures, bright and sparkling and fresh in the spirit, renewed. And don't look around you, wondering who I'm talking about and who's now so fresh and sparkly and renewed, because the who is you! Accept My commendation here rather than thinking it doesn't apply to you, because it does!

**9. So now you're a new "subdivision" with new houses and new members,** and although the work will continue for a while, you'll find that you become more attractive to others during this year of strengthening, increasingly so as time goes on. The curious and the interested, visitors and sheep and friends, will drive through your area and be impressed at the additions and changes, not only in the subdivision as a whole, but in the way each house has been upgraded and renewed. They won't just whiz through to get to some other part of town, but they'll slow down and enjoy the view, getting out to enjoy a stroll down the beautiful tree-lined lanes or through the scenic parks, admiring the new and renovated houses, visiting some of the gleaming open houses, talking to you who live there and thinking about moving and settling there themselves.

**10. You see, My dear ones, this focus on change and renewal and restructuring is so that you can reach and win the lost,** feed the spiritually needy, and teach others to reach and teach and help others far more effectively than you have been. I have turned the focus inward for a time so that the outward focus can be vastly more effective and powerful, more fruitful. And now it will begin to be that way, because you've been transformed, and those who pass by will be more attracted to you. In the days to come, the sheep will flock to "come and see," and more will remain than in the past. There will be fruit that remains—more souls, more members, more disciples, more finances, and a more visible fulfillment of My promises to you.

**11. You will also find your subdivision a more pleasant place to live,** and now that your houses have been renovated and renewed, they will be cozier and more comfortable as well. The conditions will be better both physically and spiritually. It will be easier to get things done. Living and working areas will have been upgraded. Unity will be more prevalent, and the pesky Selvegion will have been expelled. There will be more ventilation to blow out the stale air of the System and keep the fresh air of the Spirit

circulating. There will be more windows and skylights to provide more light from Heaven, to help keep the occupants inspired and happy. And the stuff that filled the house before—the junk and the storage and weights and burdens that hindered you and slowed you down—will have been purged or discarded.

**12. What it comes down to is that you're a new person in a new or improved house in a rebuilt subdivision, and that's a big change and a lot to be thankful for!** And in the year to come, the year of strengthening, you can look forward to making your living conditions even more comfortable and making the subdivision more attractive and seeing it begin to grow like never before as the improvements continue! That's something you can rejoice and praise Me for throughout this year of strengthening, when things will only get better.

**13. And even if there's still a little construction going on in your part of the subdivision, just bear with it patiently,** knowing it's all for the best, to make you all that you should be and to win as many of the lost as I know you can and should! (*End of message.*)

**14. (Peter:) What tremendous promises of the great things to come.** It's wonderful to have the Master Builder get in there and spruce up our subdivisions and remodel our houses, and even make each of us a brighter and more sparkling neighbor. And we greatly look forward to the fruit that He has promised, that of more people being attracted to our subdivisions, inspired by the changes and upgrades, enjoying being close to our neighborhood, and even wanting to move in and settle there themselves! These many structural changes that we have undergone have been difficult, time-consuming, and a lot of hard work, but the standard of discipleship has now been clarified and the FD Family is being strengthened and improved, and will continue to become stronger as we continue to obey.

**15. It's important for us to remember the end goal in what we're doing, why we're sacrificing and working so hard to make these**

**changes in the Family.** It's not just so we like ourselves better and have more order or organization. It's all about winning the world, being a sample of full-time discipleship, becoming better witnesses. That's where we're headed, and thankfully we're reaching our goals slowly but surely!

**16. Just because we've moved out of the year of restructuring, it doesn't mean there won't be any more changes or "upgrades" to our houses and subdivisions.** We'll keep improving, as there's so much to be done in order for our Homes and individual disciples to become as strong as we need to be. There's a lot to prepare for, so we can look forward to more "construction" in the months to come as well. But all of this leads to better, stronger, happier, more fruitful Homes and a more effective and powerful witness. Praise the Lord!

### **Why a new shepherding program for 2005**

**17. As you will recall, in "Getting Stronger!—Part 1," I wrote:** "The Lord led us to make some major changes in the VS program; in fact, to do away with it altogether, and to come up with a new program for the spiritual shepherding of the Family. It's a major departure from the past, one which caused us at the [VS IB] meeting—and will cause you and the Family at large—to let go of the hitching posts within our minds and to move out by faith to embrace a new plan, a new idea, one which we hope will help to raise up and train more people in the area of spiritual shepherding. This change not only eliminates the VS program as we know it, and puts a new program in its place, but will also make some modifications in the governance of the Homes themselves" (ML #3515:27, GN 1103).

**18. In this GN I'll be explaining more about the new program that will replace the VS program,** and the modifications of the governance of the Homes.

**19. Here is some background, which will give you further understanding of why these changes are needed.**

- **In order for our Homes to be spiritually strengthened, we must increase the focus placed on spiritual shepherding at the Home level; thus a program must be designed to train and strengthen the Home shepherds.** The front line of spiritual shepherding is the Home, and that battle must be fought by the Home shepherds. The shepherding body in the Home must be trained so they have the wherewithal to properly shepherd the Home members. Any program that doesn't achieve this, that doesn't push the spiritual shepherding to the Home shepherds rather than outside shepherds (such as VSs, RSs, etc.) will collapse in time. Only by properly training the Home shepherds can we ever hope to have Homes that stay on an even keel and progress spiritually.
- **The spiritual shepherding of our Homes is sorely lacking, and therefore changes need to be made** in order to facilitate spiritual growth within the Home and its members. To this end we must design a training program to teach the Home shepherds how to spiritually shepherd their Home. We must also reeducate the Home members as to the importance of spiritual shepherding, in accepting such shepherding from their Home shepherds, and to understand the need to elect the right people to the job of Home shepherds.
- **To achieve this, we must make some structural changes in the makeup of the Home teamwork,** so that sufficient time and focus is placed on the spiritual shepherding needs of each individual and the Home collectively. In order to do this, some changes must be made within the structure of the teamwork so that many of the responsibilities which presently reside with the teamwork are handled in a way that will allow the Home shepherds to have the time to properly do the job of spiritually shepherding the Home and its members.

**20. The new shepherding program needs to focus on training the Home shepherds to shepherd their people,** as opposed to the past program, which required the VSs to be very involved in shepherding the individuals in numerous Homes. The main goal of the new program must be to train Home shepherds to spiritually shepherd their Home members, otherwise the Homes will never become winning teams, for as Mama has often said, "If the spirit is right, the work will be right." The only winning teams will be those that are right in spirit, and to be right in spirit takes shepherding.

**21. Those involved in this new program that will replace the VS program will train Home shepherds.** They will avoid getting in there and counseling Home members, as that's the job of the Home shepherds. The focus of the new program is training the Home shepherds to look to the Lord and His Word in order to solve the Home's or individual's problems, not for the outside shepherds to do it.

**22. We must create a training program for this new position so that everyone who gets the job, whether at the beginning of the program or years from now, will receive the same basic training.** There must be ongoing training as well. We must put in safeguards to protect these who will train the Home shepherds from becoming overloaded with other "table tending" responsibilities so they can do the job they're supposed to. We must safeguard them in their spiritual lives so they don't burn out, as theirs will be a spiritual ministry of shepherding, mentoring, and training Home shepherds.

**23. The job itself must be doable.** It mustn't be so large or extensive that it's unreasonable to expect that it be done properly. It must be manageable so as to allow those doing it to also have a life other than their work, which means having the time to be Home members and parents, to have some free time, time to get refilled spiritually, to have conference days, to witness, etc.

**24. The Lord spoke extensively at Summit 2003 (as well as prior to the Summit and**

since then) about the great need to train our Home teamworks, in order to make them the strong shepherding bodies that they need to be. We have to strengthen the Family at the Home level by training the Home shepherds to properly shepherd their Home members, because that will strengthen the Family as a whole. The Homes themselves need to be strengthened, and, in order to be strengthened, they need Home shepherds who are going to help to strengthen them by spiritually shepherding them.

**25. The Home is the most important unit within our Family, because the Home is where discipleship is lived and thrives.** We haven't had enough strong winning team Homes within the Family for many years now, and one of the main reasons we haven't had strong Homes is because we haven't had strong spiritual shepherding at the Home level. In many cases the role of shepherding the Home has fallen into the laps of our VSs, and even RSs in some cases, which isn't realistic or fruitful.

**26. Many Home teamworkers have abdicated their spiritual responsibilities.** In many cases the Home teamwork positions have become of no effect, with some Homes voting the wrong people onto their Home teamwork. They vote in people they like, people who they are familiar with, or people who have management skills, but not people who they expect to shepherd them spiritually or move the Home forward spiritually.

**27. Unfortunately, many teamworks don't know how to shepherd well, nor do they want to shepherd.** The Home doesn't expect or want the teamwork to shepherd them either, and thus the Homes remain weak. We understand that this is getting better in some cases, especially since the beginning of 2004, but there are still major mindsets about teamworks and shepherding that need to be changed.

**28. The emphasis on training the Home shepherds goes hand in hand with the need to revamp the VS program**—so we've had to look at both of these important issues. Some of the things we discussed at the VS IB meeting were:

- What are we expecting of the Home teamworkers? What is their role, their job description?
- Should we modify the portfolios of the Home teamworkers? Is the present setup of having a minimum of three teamworkers covering the personnel, outreach, business, and childcare portfolios as the collective teamwork actually working, or is there a better plan?
- What do the Home teamworkers need training in and input about?
- How can we give the Home teamworks the training and shepherding they need?

**29. In order to strengthen the Home teamworks, it's pretty clear that someone—or a body of someones—needs to be tuning into them and pouring into them.** Training the Home teamworks was not a primary focus of the VS program, therefore it was neglected. And even if it had been a clear mandate, our VSs would not have been able to adequately train the Home teamworks because they were too busy being personal visitation shepherds. They spent their time going into Homes and working on individuals' personal problems, having talk time with individuals, resolving messy problems in the Homes, and disciplining errant Home members. They felt responsible for the bleat of every single sheep. While this was commendable, and they did a great job in being listening ears and helping to direct individuals to the Lord and helping them with their problems, in essence they were doing the job that the Home teamworkers should have been doing all along.

**30. There were simply not enough VSs, nor could there ever have been enough VSs to service and personally shepherd every individual in every Home.** They felt responsible for every single Family member, for every single personal problem that came to their doorstep, and because they love the Lord and they love the Family, they felt compelled to do their best to help each Family member, even to their own hurt. This is commendable,

but it can't be the vision for the shepherding program of the future.

**31. We must make changes in order to refocus the whole VS pillar, so that it is more effective in raising the quality of the spiritual shepherding within the Family.** This pillar can no longer feel responsible to personally handle the shepherding of individual Home members. Instead, it must focus on teaching, training, mentoring, and coaching those in each Home whose job it is to shepherd the individuals.

### **The new coach program**

**32. After much discussion, prayer, brainstorming, and hearing from the Lord, He has led us to completely do away with the present VS program.** We will no longer have “visiting servants” who visit Homes, tend to the needs of individuals in Homes, and are involved in varying degrees with problems at the Home level. Instead, we've developed a program where the Home shepherds—those who spiritually shepherd the Home members—will have “coaches.” The name of the VS board will change to the Coaching and Shepherding board (CS board), and “coach” will be the official name for those who will help to mentor\* and train the Home shepherds. Each coach will work with the shepherds of three to five FD Homes. (\*mentor: advise, guide, counsel, tutor.)

**33. I will explain the changes in the Home teamwork more in detail later, but in order to grasp the role of the coaches,** it's important to understand that the manner in which the Homes are shepherded and managed will change. Instead of three or four teamworkers who hold the positions of personnel teamworker, childcare teamworker, outreach teamworker and business teamworker, there will instead be a team of at least two people who will take care of the spiritual shepherding and general spiritual direction/state of the Home. We will refer to this body as the “Home shepherds.”

**34. In addition to this, there will be another body that will consist of at least**

**two people** who will be responsible for the organization and practical running of the Home. That body will be called the “Home managers.” Together, the Home shepherds and Home managers will comprise what will be called the Steering Council.

**35. I'll come back to this later in this GN, to explain how all of this works,** but for now at least you will understand what I'm referring to when talking about the Home shepherds, as that's important to the explanation about the role of the coaches.

**36. Please go into this explanation with the understanding that the coaches' job will be different from the VS job as you know it.** The coaches' job will be to focus on the Home shepherds. The coaches will invest their time in training the Home shepherds in shepherding skills, in how to counsel people and help them through their problems, in the use of our spiritual gifts and tools for their shepherding, in how to properly discipline Home members and to have the conviction and love to do so. Coaches will be available for counsel when the Home shepherds are faced with a problem that they don't know how to handle. In such cases, the coaches will not come in and resolve the problem themselves, but will help the Home shepherds learn how to handle it.

**37. They will advise the Home shepherds in matters that pertain to the spiritual shepherding of their Home.** They will pray for the shepherds of the Homes they coach. They will lead the shepherds to the appropriate Word to go to when they are faced with a problem. They will give P&P questions to the shepherds to ask the Lord in order to find the answers they need. They will teach the shepherds how to handle difficult personalities within the Home.—All of this with the goal of teaching the shepherds how to properly spiritually shepherd their Home, as well as each other, to truly be their brother's keeper.

**38. This will bring our shepherding program in line with the concept of Home accountability,** making the Home shepherds

and the individual Home members ultimately responsible for the spiritual state of the individuals and the Home overall.

**39. Of course, this is going to require a major mindset change for everyone within the Family.** Home members are going to have to change their deeply ingrained mindsets of how they look at their Home shepherds. Instead of the Home shepherds spending so much of their time being business or organizational people or schedule coordinators, they are now going to get involved in the Home members' lives. Home members won't be able to run to the VSs for personal time anymore, or to solve their problems, because the VSs will no longer exist and the coaches won't be interacting directly with Home members, but will be teaching the Home shepherds to do that instead.

**40. The coaches will have a whole new job (as compared to the VSs of the past), and that will require many mindset changes as well.** Any former VSs who might be called to this new job of coaching are going to have to forsake their present mode of operating—the extensive visitation, the talk times with Home members, the personal shepherding of individuals in the Homes—and they're going to have to take on the role of shepherding, mentoring, communicating with, training and helping the Home shepherds. The coaches cannot feel responsible to tend to the needs of the individuals within the Homes. The coaches will work exclusively with and through the Home shepherds, training them to take care of the Home's problems and tend to the Home's spiritual needs themselves. The coaches will not focus on being responsible for the Home members, but rather on being responsible to coach and train the Home shepherds.

**41. This doesn't mean that the coaches will have no concern for the members of the Homes.** It just means that when they hear someone is having problems and needs help, instead of giving that help themselves, they will make sure the Home shepherds do, and will help them learn to do it correctly.

**42. The coaches will be advisers to the Home shepherds on spiritual shepherding matters, not micromanagers who get involved with the details of the actual running or business of the Home.** The Home Council, Home managers, and the Home shepherds will be the ones running the Homes; they'll be making the decisions. The coaches won't have anything to do with the decisions the Home makes (except for the Home where the coach actually lives; in that Home the coach will have a vote, just like every other voting member). It is important that the Homes are the ones accountable for their decisions and actions. The coaches' sole role will be that of a mentor, counselor, trainer, and adviser to the Home shepherds on the spiritual shepherding of the Home.

**43. A coach will mentor the Home shepherds of three to five FD Homes, which would include the Home where the coach lives.** The coaches will not be able to be one of the Home shepherds of their own Home, nor can coaches chair or sit on other boards, which will protect the coaches from getting too busy, overloaded, or distracted from their job of helping to train the Home shepherds. (A coach can, however, participate in board activities without being part of that board, as long as those activities don't distract him from his primary job—that of being a coach and mentor of the Home shepherds he works with.)

**44. You might feel that not allowing coaches to be one of the Home shepherds of their own Homes will weaken their Homes,** or that their not being allowed to chair or sit on other boards will weaken the board structure at a time when we want the boards to be strong and move forward. Those are legitimate concerns and we discussed them at length and prayed about these decisions, getting several confirmations from the Lord.

**45. We came to the conclusion that while allowing coaches to shepherd their own Homes or be on other boards might be an immediate boost to that Home or board, it would have potential to impede the overall plan of the**



**Lord**, so that the long-term goals and purpose of this new program could be thwarted. We might make it easier for some Homes or boards for a while by allowing coaches to spread out their efforts more, but if we were to do so, with time we could very well find that the program has not been entirely successful, nor has it accomplished the primary and absolutely necessary goals. The end result, a year or two down the road, could be that the Family is not strengthened and preserved.

**46. Therefore, we determined that we must keep the long-term vision;** we must work toward the ultimate goals, rather than trying to stay within our present framework or hold on to something that feels “safe” because we’re familiar with it. We need to go into this new program looking to the future, to where we’re headed. We need to bear in mind how the Family will be in the months and years to come, because this program is designed to meet the needs of the Family of the future, not the Family of the past or even of today.

**47. Also, as I touched on briefly, we need to protect our coaches from burnout.** We don’t want coaches to run into the same problems that our VSs faced, especially that of being so very busy that they didn’t have sufficient time with the Lord or their families. If coaches do not sit on other boards or serve as Home shepherds of their own Homes, then more people will eventually be raised up to fill these positions.

**48. We need to train new and additional leadership,** so if coaches are not on other boards and do not shepherd their own Homes, that will open many slots of responsibility that others can fill. These now open positions of responsibility will hopefully provide many, including our young people, with the chance to get more involved in their Homes, the board structure, etc., which will help to strengthen the Family and bring other potential leaders into positions of greater responsibility and fulfillment. Down the line we may discover that coaches need to be involved with the MM Homes to some extent, so their job may very well grow.

**49. Question:** Even though at the launch of the coach program, coaches will only be working with FD Homes, is there a way the MM Homes can also benefit from this Home Shepherd Training Program?

**50. Answer: Lord willing, aside from the coaches’ role of advising and mentoring the Home shepherding bodies, there will also be a Home Shepherd Training Program created during the first half of 2005.** We’re hoping to make the bulk of this training program available to the whole Family (likely via the MO site), and thus MM Homes will also be able to avail themselves of this training.

**51. Additionally, communal MM Homes are more than welcome to structure their Home’s governance just as the FD Homes will be set up.** If an MM Home has sufficient personnel and wishes to adopt this new Home shepherd/Home manager structure, that’s perfectly fine.

**52. The question of whether a coach could sit on his or her Home’s Home shepherd or Home manager team was a question discussed at length.** We understand that many VSs were also part of their Home’s teamwork, and it’s only natural that if someone is selected to become a coach and receives coach training, that the Home he or she lives in would most likely want the coach to fill some position within the Steering Council, whether as a Home shepherd or Home manager. We realize in saying “coaches cannot be Home shepherds or Home managers,” that we’re in essence eliminating anywhere from 80–100 people worldwide from filling these Home governance positions. (Based on the estimated number of FD Homes, we’re figuring that there will be around 80–100 coaches worldwide.)

**53. As I explained earlier, when we discussed this point at length and prayed about it,** the Lord clearly showed us that for the sake of the coaches themselves, as well as the success of the coach program, it was imperative to require that coaches not fill any position within the Home governing structure. The coaches are going to have a big job, and the nature of the coaching job—that of mentoring, advising, giving counsel, and teaching others to do the job of a Home shepherd well—is different than the hands-on job of being a Home shepherd yourself. If we were to allow coaches to also fill Home shepherd roles, it's likely that such coaches would tend to overstep their official coaching bounds, by getting more involved in the Homes they coach and tending to meddle and “do” the job themselves, rather than teaching the Home shepherds how to do the job. For this reason, and many others, the Lord confirmed the need to have this safeguard in place.

**54. If someone in your Home is invited to join the Coach Training Program,** the RSs will contact the potential coach trainee and your Home, in order to receive your Home's consent to this person joining the Coach Training Program. At this point, you would realize that if that individual is appointed to be a coach at the end of the Coach Training Program, he or she would no longer be able to fill a Home shepherd or Home manager position, so you'd probably want to begin immediately to raise someone else up and train them to fill the gap. Your Home might have some concerns that your Home will suffer, as the coach will not be able to be a Home shepherd or Home manager, and you might feel this will weaken the shepherding or management of your Home.

**55. In reality, we believe there are a number of advantages to having a coach living in your Home.** While not every Home will have a resident coach, those who do (and who sacrifice the possibility of him or her being a Home shepherd or Home manager within your Home) will have the opportunity to receive more hands-on and specific coaching. Just the fact that you have a

coach living on the property will automatically give your Home's shepherds extra coaching because your shepherds will benefit from more direct shepherding and oversight from your coach. Your coach also has the right to attend Home shepherd meetings, which allows the coach the opportunity to shepherd and counsel your Home's shepherds fairly closely.

**56. So while you will have to raise up others to fill the Home shepherd and Home manager positions if you have a resident coach,** any new shepherds will be in a pretty good position to be trained, to be raised up, and to learn and grow. Your resident coach can pour into them, train them, and help them as they learn. Raising up new shepherds and giving people the opportunity to learn, grow, stretch their faith, and step out into the Lord's new anointing for them is something that we should all support and encourage. It's preparation for the future—not only the future of the Family, but the future of your Home as well. What if the Lord were to call your present Home shepherds elsewhere? Who would you raise up to take on that job? Well, if you've been training new people all along, then you'll have options. There will be people who can fill the role and keep your Home moving forward and progressing spiritually.

**57. Please keep these points in mind, should your RSs approach your Home about an individual(s) in your Home joining the Coach Training Program.** Don't be short-sighted or look just at today's immediate needs. You're likely going to have to raise up a few new people to positions of responsibility in any case, and there are perks to having a resident coach, so please consider these factors when praying and making any such decisions as a Home. (Note: Coach trainees can be Home shepherds or Home managers. Only if the coach trainee were actually chosen to be a coach would he need to step off the Steering Council of his Home.)

**58. Here's an excerpt of a message the Lord gave when we asked Him about this topic,** which sheds more light on the need for the coaches to remain focused on their coaching

job and how that plays into the overall success of the coach program.

**59. (Jesus:) Do not overload the coaches with more than they are capable of juggling.** They will already be involved in a number of other things, and will bear responsibilities aside from their coaching job, simply as a result of your communal lifestyle. As you know, it takes time to live. It takes time to be a disciple. It takes time to be a parent. It takes time to fulfill Home duties, to build unity, to fellowship with fellow disciples, and so on. Therefore, safeguards need to be put in place to ensure that the coaches have sufficient time to focus on their main responsibility of coaching.

**60. Set the coaches free from sitting on the Home shepherd or Home manager bodies.** Teach and train your coaches to focus, to prioritize, to give of their best to their new ministry. The coaches will already be stretching themselves and being pressed to learn, grow, and receive training for their new job, so don't overload them with Home shepherding duties that they are personally responsible to perform, or it will be too much.

**61. It's of utmost importance that this coach program succeeds; it's key to strengthening the discipleship sample of the FD Family.** To ensure success, you must set up specific safeguards to guarantee that the coaches are focusing on their main job at hand of being coaches. I will raise up others to sit on the Home shepherding and Home management bodies. The coaches themselves don't need to personally hold those positions of either Home shepherds or Home managers. This opens up another advantage to this plan, which is a forced need to spread the load and raise up new leadership.

**62. Broaden the base of Home-level leadership by letting others step into the role of Home shepherds and Home managers.** One way to raise up new leadership is by giving them responsibility and the opportunity to grow into the needs in the Home. People grow up quickly when given room to do so. Showing

faith in people is like leaven. In this case, it's the leaven of faith at work. Have faith that I not only can raise up new shoots to take on these positions, but that I will raise up those who can do the job and who, with time and training, will do it well. Show faith in others and proceed accordingly.

**63. As you obey step by step, you will conquer and inherit the promises that I have given you regarding the success of this new coach program.** Follow this plan and you will reap the results that I have promised—the results of fruitfulness, encouragement, training, inspiration, vision, challenge, strengthening, forward progress, and success! (*End of message.*)

**64. (Peter:) With the above mentions of the importance of coaches focusing on their coaching job, etc.,** you will likely have questions concerning how much time the coach job will require, as if you end up having a resident coach, that will impact his or her contribution to the Home as well. The full details of the coach program haven't yet been worked out, but as they are, we'll present them to you so that you're informed of what the coach job entails, and what it would mean to have a coach living in your Home.

### **Coach program built on mentoring, not visitation**

**65. The coach program will not be based on visitation in which the coaches get involved with all the individuals in the Homes.** Some visitation will be necessary, of course, but we do not expect that the coaches will be traveling as much as the VSs did, and when they do visit a Home it will be with different expectations and to fulfill different goals. They will not be responsible nor have the authority to check out everything from the stewardship of the cars to the cleanliness of the kitchen cupboards. They will not be spending time counseling individuals in the Home (unless they're doing so with one of the Home shepherds, as a learning experience for that shepherd).

**66. They will be focused on helping the Home shepherds with the spiritual shepherding of the Home, helping the Home shepherds learn to implement the CS board criteria, and training the Home shepherds to do their job.** Some of that training will be given via the clinical method, as the coach might work hand in hand with the Home shepherds to help them learn to shepherd the Home members and to help them learn to lead meetings related to the spiritual shepherding of the Home (such as conducting devotions, prayer and praise meetings, Loving Jesus nights, times of spiritual fun and fellowship, etc.). They will also work directly with the Home shepherds to help them grow in shepherding skills such as people handling, problem solving, resolving personality conflicts, etc. But the work of the coach is not to do the job himself, but to teach the Home shepherds to do it. The goal is that the Home shepherds eventually become less dependent on the counsel and help of the coach, as in time they will have learned to do the job themselves.

**67. When a coach visits a Home, it is with the purpose of training the Home shepherds.** It's not to get involved with each Home member, and he should not conduct himself in a manner that would cause those Home members to become dependent on the coach for spiritual shepherding, counsel, input, etc. The point is to train the Home shepherds to care for their own flocks, which is the job of a Home shepherd.

**68. A coach can attend the meetings that the Home shepherds lead related to the spiritual shepherding of the Home,** but he will not be a part of any of the Home shepherd teams, nor is it his role to influence the decisions or have an official “say” via a vote in decisions. But he can offer counsel and help the Home shepherds with difficulties they encounter, direct them to the Word, offer suggestions, etc.

**69. In his own Home, the coach will coach the Home shepherds.** He will be a member of the Home Council in his Home, and will have a vote in the Home just as every other voting member has. He will not, however, hold any

other official positions of responsibility in his Home. This is a safeguard put in place so that the coach will not be overly involved with the practical side of his own Home, or more focused on the spiritual shepherding of the members of his own Home, to the neglect of the other two to four Homes he is responsible to coach.

### **Coach Training Program 2005**

**70. The coaches will need training; they will need to understand what their responsibilities are, what the parameters of the job are, and then stick within them.** To facilitate this, Lord helping us, Mama and I, with the help of the International CS board, will create a Coach Training Program. This program will consist of a job description that will explain the aspects of the job of a coach, a number of videos to offer further training, and then ongoing training through a coaches' website.

**71. The goal is to have the training program videos and accompanying reading material finished and available to the RSs by March of 2005.**

**72. The RSs will now be looking for and praying about potential coaches.** Potential coaches can be chosen from the pool of former VSs, although it's not limited to them. The RSs will also be considering people for coach training who have never been VSs or who possibly have not been in any shepherding position before.

**73. Any potential coaches will take the training course during the second quarter of 2005,** and by the first part of July the RSs will decide which of the coach trainees will actually become coaches. Not everyone who participates in the coach training program will necessarily become a coach, because they might already have a ministry that they cannot be taken away from, or they might be better suited for a different board or responsibility, but nonetheless, the training will benefit those who are not appointed as coaches, as they'll be better prepared to fill other roles in their Homes or on boards.

**74. More details of the official authority of the coaches will be published before the**

**coaches are appointed.** This is still being ironed out with the Regional shepherds and the WS administration department, but by the time the coach program will go into effect, this information will be available.

**75. There is also “temporary legislation” for the period of January to July 2005, the six months when there will be no VSs or coaches,** to take care of various disciplinary procedures and other matters that the RCC now handles. (The reason for this “temporary legislation” is because with no VSs in place, the RCC will be disbanded. The “temporary legislation” will be explained in the accompanying addendum.)

**76. To help support this new shepherding program, there will be a shepherding desk set up in each region** (see definition in the accompanying addendum), which will be overseen by the regional chairperson(s) of the CS board. This shepherding desk will handle much of the administrative shepherding work that the RCC has been responsible for. There will be some reshuffling and reallocating of some of the RCC responsibilities to take part of the load off the shepherding desk and regional CS board chairperson(s), but broadly put, unless otherwise specified in the addendum to this GN or in another published Charter amendment, during the interim period the shepherding desk will take on the role of the RCC. If, during the interim period, a situation arises that needs investigation, the regional chairperson(s) of the CS board may appoint a designated representative to act on their behalf. You can read the details of these and other Charter procedures in the addendum to this GN that will be published shortly by the WS administration department.

### **Being “weaned” from the care of the VSs**

**77. While it may be somewhat difficult for you to be without VSs for half a year while we are planning and preparing to launch the coach program,** this period of absence of outside shepherds is necessary for a number of reasons: The first is that our VSs need a break. They will

have gone through the year of restructuring, which has been an extremely busy and difficult year for them. Some of our VSs have been on the job for year after year, and they now need time away from the fray, to let their wounds heal, to get refilled and strengthened. The Lord wants to reward the VSs with this time of rest and reprieve from their faithful labors.

**78. Second, having half a year without the VS program running will help Homes to let go of their dependence on outside shepherds to fix their problems.** This is very important, as Homes need to have a change of mindset when the new coach program comes into play. By having a six-month period with no VSs it will be much easier for you, dear Family, to perceive the coach program as something different, especially as you will be used to operating without VSs.

**79. We realize that some Homes, particularly those in more remote locations, have not had much visitation or contact with your VSs.** If that’s the case for your Home, then it may not be that difficult for you to make this transition. However, the changes needed in moving to the new shepherding program the Lord has given us will require mindset changes on the part of all Family members and Homes. So even if the specifics of this “shoe” don’t seem to fit your Home, ask the Lord what mindset changes He knows you need.

**80. This is a basic summary of the goals of the program. When praying about the overall program, the Lord said:**

**81. (Jesus:) I want to send out the old and bring in the new.** Sometimes the new is uncomfortable and difficult, but if it’s My will—as this program is—then I will cause it to bring forth fruit. This program will bring forth fruit in many ways. It will bring forth fruit in strengthening the former VSs, as they will be able to step down from the demanding ministry that they’ve been engaged in for years. It will bring forth fruit in strengthening the new leadership that you will raise up. It will bring forth fruit in stronger Homes. It will bring forth fruit in strengthening

the Family. It will bring forth fruit in happier Family members, happier coaches, and happier Homes. It will be a good change, although at first it will be uncomfortable.

**82. No changes are ever easy, especially when they're really good changes that the Enemy fights hard,** knowing the positive impact they will have on the Family. As this plan plays out, you will see and know more fully how directly I have led you and what a lifesaver this coaching program is destined to be. (*End of message.*)

**83. (Peter:) If you are concerned about not having VSs for six months,** if you're wondering how your Home will do or if you will weaken because of the lack of visitation or involvement with outside shepherds that the VSs provided to some extent, it's important to remember that we have done, and will continue to do, a great deal to strengthen the Homes.—All of which should help you during this period. Here's a list of various initiatives that have already been undertaken that will strengthen the Homes:

- At the time of reading this GN you will have received the criteria for each of the six board pillars, which makes clear to the FD Homes what the standard is and what is expected of them.
- Instructional handbooks and how-to aids will be published by most of the boards to help you know how to meet the criteria. These should be posted on the MO site not later than the first quarter of 2005. (Once posted, these pubs will be printed as soon as possible.)
- There will be the Home reviews, and from the Home review your Home will have a better understanding of where you stand in each pillar and how you're doing, and thus which areas to work on.
- There will be a workshop at the time of the Feast for each pillar, which will give each Home a boost and practical head start in their progress toward fulfilling the boards' criteria.

- Mama has created targeted pubs to help strengthen the Family spiritually, such as the “Shooting Straight” and “Get Up and Get Over It” GN series, etc.
- The FD Home size has been raised to a minimum of six voting members (18+), which will make the Homes more likely to succeed in being the sample of full-time discipleship that is the commission of the FD Family.
- We've introduced the concept of Home accountability, which should give each Home member personal incentive to make your Home work.
- We have created the MM category, and individuals and Homes who are not living the FD standard have moved into that category, thus strengthening the FD Family and providing an active and fruitful level of service for many faithful Family members.
- The Family has gone through the renewal, which strengthened and cleansed each person.

**84. All of this is having, and will continue to have, a strengthening effect on your Homes.**

And you have the Word—the Lord's tailor-made counsel for you, for today. Perhaps you've been relying too much on outside shepherds or leaders, in which case you'll be able to shift your focus to the “Letters being the leaders” and getting ahold of the Lord personally for the needs of your own spiritual life, as well as your Home as a body.

**85. Here's a message from Dad on this subject,** which should encourage you and help give you the faith that it can be done!

**86. (Dad:) I can see some of you wondering how this is going to work, How is it going to play out in real life?** Don't waste your time wondering how things might turn out or what bad twists the road of your Home might take during this six-month period of no VSs, and so much change and adjustment taking place in your Home and lives. Instead, turn all those

wonderings into praise, prayer, and claiming the keys!

**87. The foundation stone to shaking the Enemy's fears and worries,** and to believing that you can not only perform what the Lord is asking of you, but perform it well, with His help, is to believe that He is in control, that He loves you, and that He is not going to place burdens on you that are greater than you can bear. And it's true, He never will!

**88. You know Jesus well enough to know that He loves and cares for you more than you do for yourself.** He knows your needs far better than you do, and in this case, what you need is this very revolution! You need this change. You need this time to realign, to study the clarified standard of Family discipleship, and you need to sink some effort, prayer, and time into uniting with your Home and fellow disciples in order to ensure that your Home is a shining sample of discipleship.—Not a perfect sample, but a shining one, and by that I mean one that shines with the Lord's light, unity, happiness, praise, and obedience to His Word and instructions to you.

**89. If all of these changes start looming large and looking complicated, stop, take a deep breath, and break it down.** Take it in bite-size chunks. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other, while you plug your ears to the lies of the Enemy, and keep your eyes focused on your Husband and His good gold promises, and before you know it, you'll have reached your destination—Future of the Family Station!

**90. I want to encourage you that it can be done! These changes will work!** They're masterminded and crafted by the great Mastermind and Crafter Himself, so they're bound to work. Only don't let the Enemy weasel his nose into your life and allow him to attack your faith. Faith is a key to this program working! So diligently guard your faith. Actively boost it through faithful study of the Word, of the Lord's promises. And wield the key promises—those will set the Devil back on his heels without fail!

**91. If you and your Home will go to the Word, if you commit to unity and obedience, you won't have trouble following the "little dog line" of the Word.** The Lord is spelling things out very clearly these days. So won't you try to just follow the Word and obey it? Let the Letters be the leaders! It will work, and Jesus has ordained it to work, so if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, and obedience as a grain of sand, you will move the Devil's mountains of defeat and lies, and you will become that shining sample of discipleship that I'm talking about.

**92. Come on, Family! You can do it,** because Jesus is ready, willing, and waiting to do it through you! (*End of message.*)

### **New structure for the Home teamwork**

**93. (Peter:)** In addition to the implementation of the new coach program in mid-2005, the present Home teamwork structure will change. This is a change that will affect every single FD Home, beginning March 2005.

**94. To give a little background on the need for this change:** For years now the majority of Home teamworks have been focused on the practical running of the Home, to the neglect of the spiritual shepherding of the Home. This contributed to many Home members' dependence on VSs to give them personal shepherding and counsel, and to help solve their problems. Of course, there weren't nearly enough VSs to adequately shepherd so many people, so individuals did not always receive the help, safeguarding, and personal shepherding they needed. This, coupled with the Homes' focus on the practical aspects of Home life while often neglecting the spiritual shepherding, contributed to the Family's overall weakening and compromise.

**95. Our goal at the CS IB meeting was to create a structure where the Home would be well shepherded, but also well organized.** The details of the new election procedures will reach you by February, but following is a basic overview of the new shepherding/Home teamwork structure:

**96. Each FD Home with 12 or less members age 16 and over will elect at least two adults (18+) to be the Home shepherds of the Home.** If your Home has 13 or more members age 16 or over, you will elect at least three adults (18+) to be the Home shepherds of your Home. From those two/three people, you will elect one to be the monitor of the CS board criteria. Your Home shepherds will be responsible to see that the CS board criteria are fulfilled in your Home, as well as to see that all the Home members receive the spiritual shepherding they need, and that all aspects of the board criteria that involve spiritual shepherding are being fulfilled.

**97. The Home shepherds do not have to personally do every bit of spiritual shepherding.** For example, there might be someone who is not one of the Home shepherds, but who is capable of doing spiritual shepherding within the boundaries of one of the other boards. Let's say a member of your Home is gifted in caring for the children and has a real heart for them. He or she is capable of shepherding the children, and the Home shepherds may delegate that responsibility to that person. This could be a Home member who is not on the Steering Council, or it could be a Home manager who holds the "CP monitor" responsibility. The Home shepherds can also delegate the responsibility for some spiritual shepherding to a Home manager, if he or she is gifted along those lines. Situations such as these mentioned are perfectly fine. However, if there is no one in your Home who is gifted in the area of spiritual shepherding concerning a certain board, and there are aspects of that board's criteria that require spiritual shepherding, then the team of Home shepherds must see to it that that shepherding is taken care of somehow, even if they have to do it themselves.

**98. You might feel that two or three Home shepherds for your Home is too many, that it's a duplication of effort or it's top-heavy with too many "chiefs" for so few "Indians."** But when discussing this with the RBCs of the CS board and later counseling with the International Board Chairpersons (IBCs), the

conclusion reached was that having two or three people provides more balance and counsel in the shepherding of the Home, more people get training from the coach, it protects the shepherds from being overloaded and getting burned out, it emphasizes the need for increased spiritual shepherding if you are to have a winning team, and in the event that one of the Home shepherds is away on a trip, is sick, has a baby, etc., you will still have a shepherd available in the Home.

**99. Next, if you live in an FD Home with 12 or less members age 16 and over, you will elect at least two adults (18+) to be the Home managers.** If your Home has 13 or more members age 16 or over, you will elect at least three adults (18+) to be the Home managers of your Home. This body will be responsible for the organization and practical running of the Home. The Home managers will be responsible for such practical things as finances, budgeting, organization, business, visa trips, legal work, Home care, scheduling for outreach, shopping, provisioning, Home duties, and the physical and practical aspects of childcare, etc. All practical aspects of the Home's running and organization would fall to this body.

**100. This body of a minimum of two or three people is also responsible to ensure that the practical aspects of the various board criteria are fulfilled.** Not that these Home managers have to personally do all these things, but they're responsible to see that they're done. For example, your Home may have a good book-keeper who is organized and keeps the financial books well. This person doesn't necessarily have to be on the Home management team. However, the Home managers are responsible to make sure that this person is handling the funds well, that all the needs of the Home are met in accordance with the Home's decisions, and that the Home is aware of the financial state of the Home, etc.

**101. After electing your Home shepherds and Home managers, please elect a "criteria monitor" for each of the other five boards.** These monitors are to be 16 years old or over. The role of these monitors is to be mindful of the



criteria for their board, to study the handbooks and practical how-to pubs for their board, and to help raise the awareness in the Home about any lacks or needs regarding that pillar. The monitors are to act as a prod for the Home, to keep the Home shepherds and Home managers aware of the needs of the Home within that board.

**102. If the Steering Council feels that a criteria monitor can assume more responsibility, they could propose to the Home that he could be delegated more responsibility regarding the board criteria that he is monitoring.** For example, the monitor could take care of certain points in relation to that pillar within the Home (i.e., outreach, childcare, etc.) which the Home managers or shepherds would otherwise need to take care of. Particularly in larger Homes, criteria monitors can be of great assistance to the Steering Council by spreading out the load on more shoulders. It also gives an opportunity to involve more people in the running of the Home. The choice to give a monitor more responsibility than simply being a “voice” in the Home for their board’s criteria is up to the Home.

**103. Having criteria monitors will hopefully avoid the potential problem of “what is everybody’s responsibility is no one’s responsibility.”** If your Home receives criteria, handbooks, and other how-to aids from each board, if you don’t have someone in the Home thinking about each board, you’re likely to miss a lot and not even remember half the things you’re supposed to be doing or working on. So by having one person in your Home thinking about each board, and working together with the Home shepherds, Home managers, and Home Council to bring up areas that need attention, you stand a better chance of making steady progress in each set of board criteria. If a criteria monitor sees that a spiritual aspect of their board criteria isn’t being fulfilled, they would go to the Home shepherds; if a practical/organizational aspect of the board they are responsible to monitor isn’t being fulfilled, they would go to the Home managers.

**104. When electing people to fill these various positions, please bear in mind the following stipulations:**

- No one can be both a Home shepherd and a Home manager.
- The person you elect from the Home shepherds to be the CS board criteria monitor cannot hold any other position. (He or she cannot also be a monitor for another board.)
- The Home shepherd(s) who is not the CS criteria monitor can also be a monitor for up to two boards.
- Those people who are Home managers can take up to two criteria monitor positions. For example, one Home manager might be both the CGO and the PR monitor, or however you feel led of the Lord. But the overall goal is to share the load by having different people take different criteria monitor positions, if at all possible.
- The Home shepherds and Home managers do not have to also be criteria monitors. Whether they are or not would depend on the size of your Home. (You could have two Home shepherds, two Home managers, and up to five other criteria monitors, none of whom are Home shepherds or Home managers.)

**105. The two bodies—the Home shepherds and the Home managers—make up what we will now refer to as the Steering Council.** When the Charter is reprinted, there will be adjustments when it refers to the Home teamwork so that it accurately reflects this new structure. But generally, from now on in the GNs when we talk about the Steering Council, it will refer to these two entities together, which will be made up of the four or six adults who sit on the Steering Council. This Steering Council can be larger than four or six adults, depending on the size of your Home.

**106. The Steering Council is two separate entities, but together they form the body that determines the general plan for the implementation of the overall goals and direction set by the Home Council.** When the

shepherds and managers sit together, they make decisions that help to ensure that the Home is upholding the FD standard and fulfilling the board criteria and the Charter. If these two bodies are kept informed and unified regarding the Home’s collective decisions, priorities, initiatives, activities, needs, problems, etc., then the needs of the Home will be well covered and coordinated and you will avoid “competition” between the practical and spiritual realms within the Home.

**107. After decisions are made in the Steering Council meetings, the management team is responsible to carry out the practical aspects of the decisions made, and the shepherds the shepherding aspects.** The Steering Council makes the collective decisions, based upon the already established will of the Home Council, but the responsibility for the implementation of those decisions is divided between the practical and the spiritual, with the managers taking care of the practical and the shepherds taking care of the spiritual.

**Question:** The Charter states the following: “After agreement is reached in a Home Council meeting, the decisions of the voting members are to be implemented. So even if the Home teamwork [a.k.a. Steering Council] feels the Home should do one thing, but the voting members vote to do something else, then the decision of the majority of the voting members is what should be carried out.”

Is this still the way things will work? Or does the Steering Council now have more authority than the Home Council?

**Answer:** The Steering Council does not have authority over the Home Council. The Home Council is the ultimate Home authority, and according

to its decisions, the Steering Council is then empowered to carry out those overall decisions on a day-to-day basis. The Steering Council is empowered to enact, and they are also empowered to recommend a course of direction to the Home; yet the ultimate authority, as per Home accountability, remains with the Home Council as a collective entity. The Home Council remains the body with the power to determine the policy and goals of the Home. The Steering Council will help to formulate the overall decisions, goals, and policies made by the Home Council into daily, weekly, and monthly workable plans.

**108. It’s important to remember that there are certain things that don’t need to be talked about unitedly by the Steering Council.** Issues that are solely shepherding and which don’t affect the practical running of the Home can just be talked/prayed about by the shepherds. There are many daily practical Home matters that don’t need to be brought before the shepherds; the Home managers can just talk/pray about it amongst themselves.

**109. The goal is to keep the two “arms” of the Steering Council separate so that each team, the shepherds and the managers, can work at doing its job without either one being encumbered with the details of the other.** These two teams form the collective Steering Council, but the majority of the time they don’t operate as one body but as two bodies; it’s like the Home is operating on two engines, or like two horses pulling one chariot. So while they form a united Steering Council for the purpose of overall decision-making and coordination, when it comes to practical application of their jobs, they then separate into two bodies of shepherds/managers. For example, the Steering Council could get together and decide the plan for the week or month (based on the overall decisions and goals

made by the Home Council), and address Home issues and resolve conflicts between the practical and spiritual needs of the Home, but from that point on, once the decisions are made, when they come out of the meeting, then the responsibility to carry out the decisions is separated between the practical and the spiritual.

**110. The intent of this separation is to ensure that the Home is well organized and runs well practically, but that there is also sufficient attention put on the spiritual matters and shepherding.** By keeping the two bodies separate in the implementation of the decisions, it is our hope that the shepherds will be able to “stick to their knitting,” which is shepherding, and not get overly involved in the practical running of the Home, which has been the tendency of most teamworks of the past. (Of course, the Home shepherds have to carry some load in the Home, as everyone else does. They would be expected to do practical things, but they are not responsible for the practical organization of the Home; the managers are.)

**111. The pull of the practical duties and needs of a Home is so strong that if the shepherds feel responsible for the practical as well as the spiritual, they will most likely neglect their job of shepherding the Home.** For this reason, we must put clear safeguards in place, to protect the Home shepherds from getting involved in the practical running of the Homes. While our Homes’ organization could certainly improve, that is not the side of the Family that has been most lacking or compromised. It’s imperative that there is spiritual leadership in the Homes and that the shepherds’ prime focus is on providing that spiritual leadership. The Home shepherds have to trust the Home managers to carry out the practical duties and not become embroiled in them.

**112. When the coaches are in place, they will help be a check and balance for the shepherds and make sure that they’re not getting too involved with the practical running of the Home.** Of course, a Home shepherd, like any other Home member, can offer suggestions con-

cerning the practical running of the Home, and within the Steering Council body, if a practical matter or concern is on the agenda, the Home shepherds can give their opinions, counsel, and have a vote in the decision-making; however, the responsibility would then shift to the Home managers to carry out and implement the decision, as the Lord leads them.

**113. While I said that the Steering Council is responsible for decisions related to ensuring that the Home’s decisions, goals, and policies are implemented, including implementation of the Charter and board criteria, that doesn’t take away from Home accountability.** Every voting member votes in the election procedure, so in essence the Home members are empowering the Steering Council to do their job, to fulfill the will of the people, which is to continue to be an FD Home. You as a Home will vote a Steering Council into power, so you are accountable for that decision, and therefore this does not contradict or weaken the policy of Home accountability.

**114. Of course, major decisions regarding the direction and goals of the Home should be presented by the Steering Council to the Home Council for the Home’s vote.** If approved, the job of the Steering Council is to then make sure that direction and goals are implemented (with the managers taking care of the practical aspects, and the shepherds the spiritual aspects). It’s important to note that any matter can be brought to the Home Council by any Home member; that hasn’t changed. The Home is still ultimately governed by the Home Council itself, but since that’s not practical on a day-to-day basis, the Steering Council assumes responsibility for the management and shepherding of the Home (implemented by the managers and shepherds respectively).

**115. So when you have your Home elections, remember to look at things differently.** You are not electing the “teamwork body”; you are electing Home shepherds and Home managers. So during Home elections you should be thinking, “Who are the people that would be the best spiritual shepherds?” And elect those

people to the shepherding body. Then think, “Who are good managers who can help run the Home well?” Then elect those people to the manager body.—Together they make up the Steering Council that will work for you to keep your Home on track and progressing in fulfilling the FD standard, the board criteria, along with your Home’s policies and goals.

**116. The minimum number of Home shepherds for a Home of 12 members age 16 and over is two. But you are not limited to only two;** you could have three if you have the available personnel and you feel the need to spread the shepherding load on more shoulders. Similarly, if your Home is larger and requires three Home shepherds and three Home managers, you’re not limited to only electing three of either the Home shepherd/manager body. If you feel the need for either more Home shepherds or Home managers, your Home is free to make that decision and elect accordingly. Be open, be flexible.

### **Summary of principles and where we’re at today**

**117. I realize this is a lot to take in.** You just learned about a new coaching program, and now this, a whole new structure for governing your Home. Granted, there are many details to try to grasp and it’s certainly a lot to understand, digest, and get ready to put into practice. There are more details and explanation coming later in this GN, but before we go further, let’s take a little breather. Let’s have a point-form review of the main points that we have established thus far.

**118. I’ll include a list here of some of the foundation points for these new changes.** You may or may not have these points straight in your mind, but a review helps sometimes, and especially when taking in a lot of new information, it’s good to regularly go back to the “touchstone” of where we’re headed and why, and what are the main principles upon which decisions have been based. Here is some point-form food for thought:

1. It is the Home’s voting members (the Home Council) who are ultimately responsible for the success of the Home. It is the combination of their efforts, decisions, and spiritual state that determines whether the Home is an on-track discipleship Home. That is Home accountability.
2. We have clearly stated through the board criteria and Home review report forms what aspects of Home life must be attended to. And we have attached eventual consequences to failure to meet the discipleship standard as per the criteria.
3. We have determined that doing well in each board’s criteria and adhering to the Home Responsibilities in the Charter (which also includes following the New Wine) will bring about a successful Home.
4. There must be a mechanism of leadership in place to channel and direct the efforts of the Home. At the same time, there must be a system of checks and balances so that all aspects of Home life are taken care of properly and given sufficient attention.
5. We have determined that a major problem in the Family at the Home level has been a lack of spiritual shepherding, which has caused serious spiritual weaknesses within the Family. We understand that the Lord has clearly stated that if these weaknesses/compromises are not strengthened, He will need to raise up others to do the job that He has called us to do.
6. In order to ensure that the spiritual needs and spiritual shepherding of Home members are given their proper priority, we have set up a team of Home shepherds in each Home.

7. The Home shepherds' responsibility is to ensure that the Home as a whole maintains a spiritual standard which is on par with being a Family discipleship Home. To achieve this, they must focus on the spiritual needs of the Home as a whole, and on the spiritual needs of the Home's members.
8. It is the Home shepherds' responsibility to attend to the spiritual needs of the Home's members, or to make sure those needs are met by someone within the Home. It is the responsibility of the Home shepherds to make sure that Home members of each age group in the Home are spiritually shepherded as required in each set of board criteria.
9. It is the Home shepherds' responsibility to guide and encourage Home members to do those things which keep the Home as a whole spiritually strong.
10. It is understood that in order for the Home to be successful, there must be a proper balance between the spiritual shepherding and practical management of the Home; each board criterion must be given proper attention.
11. We have set up a managing body which is responsible to manage the Home's daily practical affairs with the understanding that they must manage the Home in such a way that sufficient time and attention is given to each of the board criteria. This sufficient time and attention may not necessarily be equal time and attention, as the Home might be particularly weak in one or two criteria, which will require, at least temporarily, additional time and attention.
12. The long-term goal of the Home managers is to manage the Home in a manner that allows the Home to become a winning team, which translates into fulfilling each of the board criteria. It is understood that the Home managers are responsible to give the fulfillment of each board's criteria equal importance when making decisions about the managing of the Home, even if at certain times the Home may be focusing more on one set of criteria than another.
13. In order to make sure each board's criteria is given proper attention and is not overlooked by the Steering Council, we have set up board criteria monitors in each Home. The monitor of each board is responsible to monitor the Home's fulfillment of their board's criteria and to make sure the Home shepherds and Home managers are aware of any needs, lacks, etc.
14. It has been determined that giving each criteria monitor authority to force the Home to comply with their board's criteria could blur the lines of authority within the Home, resulting in disunity, competition, or a lack of balance, and therefore the monitors' authority, in relation to the Home's compliance, is limited to bringing awareness to the needs of their board's criteria, unless they are specifically given more responsibility or authority by the Steering Council, with the Home Council's approval.
15. The goal of having criteria monitors is to spur the Home forward to excellence within the board criteria. When the Home is shown by the criteria monitors that the Home is deficient in a certain pillar, Home accountability will cause the Home to take action and to invest the needed time, energy, and prayer into strengthening the weak area(s).

## **Is this too much, too fast?**

**119. All that you've just read might sound well and good in theory, but Mama and I realize that this translates into a lot of change** for you personally, your Home, your ministries, your responsibilities, your mode of operating, etc. Not only that, but we understand this isn't all you're dealing with at this time. Many of you just got together in a new Home. Some of you are adjusting to life in a bigger communal Home after years of being more on your own. You're trying to make heads or tails of six board criteria, all of which are giving you a lot of new information, assignments, and to-dos. You're giving your best shot to trying to understand everything and see what you need to do and when, and it's probably enough to make your head spin.

**120. I wouldn't blame you if you have wondered if this is all too much, too fast.** I have grappled with this considerably as well. Mama and I have discussed it numerous times.

**121. We are at a crucial time in our Family's history.** We have made some very important decisions, which the Lord is blessing. The changes made through the year of restructuring have borne the good fruit we prayed for. We are gathering momentum. We are making progress. We have reached another crossroads, as we are coming to the close of 2004 and entering the year of strengthening, and Mama and I have had to make some serious decisions. And these decisions are pivotal to the continued success of the saving of the Family.

**122. There have been numerous instances in world history where a single very good or very bad decision brought either great success or terrible defeat;** or there were good decisions that were made at the wrong time, which caused the desired good results of the decision to be lost. We realized, in counsel with the IBCs in WS and the RSs, that whether we would move forward with all these changes now or whether we'd go slower and delay some aspects of these changes until later was just such a decision. Mama and I knew that making the right decision on the tim-

ing of these changes was critical to the success of the strengthening of the Family.

**123. We discussed the pros and cons, and there was no way of knowing through our carnal reasoning or wisdom what was the right way to go.** Of course, Mama and I don't want to burden you with burdens too great to bear, dear Family. We aren't just making up new requirements and rules for the sake of organization or for change itself. These are prayed about, confirmed, and deliberate steps toward a specific goal, and that goal is to save the Family.

**124. Just days before this GN was finalized, one of the RSs again asked if this wasn't going too fast,** if we shouldn't hold on instituting some of these changes until at least mid-2005 when the coaches will be in place. That was an option, and I discussed it at length with some of my counselors and co-workers. After weighing up all the pros and cons, the possible effects, desired gains, or feared losses, we knew we had to get our answer from the Lord. We had to again check in with the Boss, our Commander and Chief who sees the whole battlefield and knows where the absolutely critical fronts are.

**125. Mama and I have been very desperate about this new plan, both the details of the changes themselves as well as the timing.** We are aware that it's costing you a lot on the Home level. We understand that it means sacrifices as you make these changes, and we are concerned as we know that it's creating a certain amount of stress and pressure in your Homes and lives. Things have been moving quickly, and while we are sorry for any difficulties these changes have brought, the alternative of not changing or moving with the Lord would be even more difficult—in fact, unacceptable. It's tough, we realize that, but there's no way around it.

**126. We once again asked the Lord to confirm His will, just before this GN was to be sent to the printers.** We asked specifically if we could make these changes more gradually, and He gave the following messages. I'm adding these prophecies here, in the middle of this GN, because I believe you need this reassurance

now, so you will not be distracted by fear of failure or wondering why we're going so fast with changes and revolutions that could bring so much upheaval and disruption to your lives and Homes.

**127. (Jesus:) Some of you may be wondering whether or not your queen and king are expecting too much of you through all of these changes,** or that if indeed they are getting all of these instructions spot-on from Me, then am I expecting too much of you, too quickly? I understand why you would have these questions, because it does seem like a lot of changes happening at once. Not only have many of you had to increase your Home size or build the beginnings of a new “winning team” by moving, closing down Homes, opening new ones, bringing new personnel into your existing Home, etc., but on top of that you're getting “hit” with all of the board criteria, which can seem pretty overwhelming.

**128. At the same time, you've been informed that the VSs, who many of you have been used to turning to for help when needed, especially at times like this, are not going to be doing any visitation,** and, in fact, that their job will change altogether, and the RSs are going to be busy training those working in the new coaching program, so they won't be available to help you either.

**129. Now, to top it all off, I have led Maria and Peter to change the structure of how the Homes are governed,** asking you to hold new elections that involve voting in more people and are therefore more complicated than before, and asking you to change the way your Homes are run so that there is a better balance between the practical running of the Home and the spiritual shepherding.

**130. “Isn't that asking too much?” As David so aptly put it, “Did God make a mistake?** Surely there must be a better and an easier way! Does anyone realize what this means on the Home level?” some of you might ask. And I know that you're not asking this in doubt or

rebellion or unyieldedness, but simply out of desperation when faced with all of this at once. It's a good and legitimate question, and if you look at it in the natural, on the surface, the most logical answer or the first reaction might be, “Yes, it is too much.” But I want to explain to you, My children, why it is not too much, and why it has to be this way.

**131. I am doing it this way not to make things more difficult for you but rather to make things easier.** That might sound preposterous, but you have to look at the long term, not just the short term. Often the changes that are going to make things easier and better in the long term require greater difficulties in the short term. A caterpillar struggling to come out of its cocoon requires pressure and difficulty for a short time, but that must occur if in the long term it is to fly and become a beautiful butterfly. If the caterpillar's release from its cocoon were made easier by the hand of one who pitied it, it would remain crippled and would never take to the skies.

**132. Believe Me, My loved ones, when I tell you that if there were an easier way to bring about the changes that I know are needed in order to ensure the survival of the Family, I would have done it.** And in fact, I have done it. It is just that at first glance, when looked at with shortsightedness, the bread appears to be a stone. But when you take a closer look and by faith begin to put it into your mouth and bite down on it, you will find that what you thought was rock-hard is indeed bread that will strengthen the body—indeed, save its life.

**133. Year 2005 is a year of strengthening for the Family.** I have told you already how weak the Family had become through compromise, through not obeying the Word, through not having Homes built around winning teams, through lack of shepherding in the Homes, and even lacks in the Family structure and lacks in clearly defining what the standard is for a Family discipleship Home. I am working on repairing these lacks and therefore strengthening these weak areas. The Family structure is being changed through

the discontinuation of the VS program and the implementation of the coach program; as well as by changing the structure of how the Homes are governed, implementing Home shepherds and Home managers and criteria monitors. The standard is being clearly defined in the board criteria and corresponding Home review checklists. The Family members' compromise is being routed out through the renewal, and safeguarded by Home accountability and coming Home reviews. And the Home unit itself is being strengthened through the new minimum Home size requirements and the push to build winning teams.

**134. All of these elements fit together and are crucial to the survival of the Family.** It is not possible to implement them one at a time. That would make it easier in some ways, as you could get used to one step before moving on to the next step. But each of these complement each other and all are needed to fit together to build the Family of the future.

**135. In its most basic form, a house consists of a foundation, four walls, and a roof.** There are many other additions made later—some necessary, some nice—but without the foundation, four walls, and roof, there is no house. So it is with these changes; they represent the foundation, walls, and roof, and unless they are all put up together, there is no “house” of the Family—the Family as it should be.

**136. That's not to say that once those essential pieces are in place, that the house is immediately pretty and a comfortable place to live.** To the contrary, the floor may still seem barren and windows need to be put in, and it will take some time before the house is a pleasant dwelling. But at least it does exist and can be lived in and provide protection from the outside elements—in this case, the Enemy's attacks through compromise, spiritual lethargy, lack of unity, lack of full obedience, etc.

**137. So I'm asking you to bear with Me as we put up all these essential elements at once, even if it's a struggle at first and all that there is to do to make your new “house” pretty and**

**nice seems overwhelming.** Yes, there is a big job ahead, but at least the basic foundation and structure is in place, and that is most important. It provides the platform by which you can turn that “house” into a “home.” The former “house” was crumbling and just about to collapse, so a new one has been built. It may not be pretty just yet, but it's strong and will stand the test of time.

**138. So have faith, My brides. Have faith in Me. Trust Me that what I am bringing about is for your good.** It is to provide you with a strong, safe, and long-lasting dwelling. It is to make your job easier in the long run, to make your lives easier and happier because you will have better Homes, happier Homes, better shepherded and managed Homes, which will ultimately help you to do a better job in fulfilling your commission, which is to reach the world with My love and gather the sheep in before the storm.

**139. Be patient. This new “house” will not be built in a day.** Your windows might just be holes in the wall at first, but as you build together they will soon have framing and panes, and eventually curtains and ties too!

**140. Yes, it is a challenge—a daunting one.** You might be asking yourselves how in the world you're going to manage to live up to what is expected, to turn that house into a home! But the reason I know I can do things this way and expect these things of you is that I know you can do it. You have been strengthened and changed through the renewal. You have dedicated yourselves to Me. You are ready for the challenges ahead—whether you feel ready or not. Don't let the Enemy lie to you and convince you that you're weaker than you really are. Because with My Spirit and the keys, you are a powerhouse—each one of you!

**141. Also understand that while I am presenting all of this to you, showing you what you must change and what you must do in your Homes to truly be My Endtime disciples, I do not expect instant perfection, instant growth, instant success.** I know and recognize that things



take time. It will take time to turn that house into a home, and I understand and allow for that. So don't give up due to feeling overwhelmed or that you can't possibly do it. Just work on it, step by step, and you will succeed.

**142. I judge you not by the speed of your success, but by the effort that you're putting into it.** If you're sitting on your bare cement floor wondering, moaning, or even arguing over why your house doesn't look beautiful, then I won't bless you. But if you're busy, not frantically running around and crashing into each other, but diligently working together in the unity of My Spirit, putting in the floors, windows, rooms, furniture, carpets, etc., then even if you don't have the perfect home just yet, I will pour out My blessings upon you and your house will stand and I will help you bring it to full completion.

**143. I do all things well, and My greatest desire, and the desire of your queen and king, is to see you safe, happy, fulfilled, and active in your service to Me.** So trust and believe that if you do your part, these changes will bring that about in the Family. This year is the start, and there are better years to come! (*End of message.*)

**144. (Peter:)** Here is another confirmation on the Lord's timing, with different word pictures, which I believe you'll find encouraging. It's important that you have faith for these changes, and that you let the Lord's promises give you an "it can be done" attitude. Of course the Devil doesn't want you to make these improvements. He doesn't want you to have faith. He doesn't want you to embrace these revolutions with enthusiasm and determination. But you can rebuke all that and you can rise above! Please let these messages from the Lord give you faith. Please believe them, meditate on them, and see what you stand to gain, and how wonderful your future will be if you just keep believing and obeying!

**145. (Jesus:)** I am pushing the Family forward into the era of strengthening, because I know that the Family needs to make the

**jump into the future that I have prepared for them.** The Family has to move from one grade to the other if you are to successfully repel the Enemy's attacks as well as to stand strong in the calling that I have for you and accomplish the task that I have set for you.

**146. The Family is passing from one grade to the next, and usually it's a pretty big job that has to happen all at once.** You don't go from third grade to third and a half grade. You go to fourth grade, and all of a sudden it's a whole new ball game. It requires a period of adjustment to get used to a new class, a much more demanding curriculum, even new schoolmates or longer school hours.

**147. Or, using the example of a change in government, it's often necessary to completely dismantle the existing government and build a new one rather than just changing it bit by bit**—because the latter moves too slowly and thereby risks getting bogged down and not changing at all.

**148. So it is necessary to introduce these things now so that the Family can be aware of them and they can get the big picture of how things will be,** what will be expected of them, how they should work together in their new Homes (whether they're actually a new Home or just "new" in the sense of now having Home accountability). It is important to give them as much of the picture as you can at once, rather than every couple of months introducing something new and yet another upheaval just when they got settled from the last one.

**149. You have to choose whether you want a massive upheaval all at once or a stretched-out version with repeated upheavals that are smaller.** Either approach can work at different times, and it is not possible to say that one is always better than the other. But in this situation, it is necessary to go with the former.

**150. The changes need to be introduced, but the changes will not all take deep root quickly.** Consider the analogy of the child moving into the new grade: At first the fourth-grade textbook will start off with elements from third

grade that the child knows, and gradually introduce him to the new curriculum. He is given time to adjust to a more difficult level of learning and he's not immediately tested on his knowledge of fourth-grade scholastics.

**151. Or consider the example of the change of government or revolution:** If the upheaval and changes are massive, then there is invariably a period of destabilization, or at least major adjustment, as the new government is put into place and the kinks are ironed out, people get used to it, etc.

**152. So while these changes need to happen all at once with the change in Home government, the criteria, etc., you must acknowledge that the full implementation of these changes will take time.** A student may get his fourth-grade math book at the start of the year and can leaf through and see all that he will be required to learn that year—but it takes time for him to work through it.

**153. This coming year is the year of strengthening, but you must also expect that it will be a year of adjustment,** a year of growing into the new plan that I have for the Family. It will be a year of stretching and exercising spiritually. The Family will not be able to properly lift the heavy weights until some time has passed, but this year they will be given the vision of the weight that they do need to carry, and they will be adding it on throughout the year, strengthening their muscles and training.

**154. So implement the changes now, quickly, but be patient in waiting for them to take root properly.** Let the Homes know what is expected of them, but encourage them that they will be given time to strengthen themselves, lest the Enemy defeat them through discouragement and fear. The approach should be like a high jumper who knows the height that he must reach, and although he starts off lower, he keeps raising the bar and stretching himself until he has met that goal. (*End of message.*)

**155. (Peter:) We pray those promises from our Lover and that wise explanation gives you**

**faith.** If you feel overwhelmed with it all, it's time to pull out the undefeatable weapon of praise and really go to work against the lies of the Enemy! Yes, these changes will require a miracle, lots of miracles!—But we are well equipped for these challenges, and in fact, we should be filled with joy as we rise to the occasion of all that awaits us in the year of strengthening!

**156. Mama and I understand that your Home will not ace every criterion right away.** We understand that you will work toward improving, that once you see the standard more clearly in each board, you will put the needed effort and prayer into making steady progress. We know it will take time, so don't get discouraged. Move along steadily, surely, and your progress will be solid. Praise the Lord!

### **Members of the Steering Council should work as equals**

**157. Now to cover a few more details about the new structure to govern the Homes.** While we are trying to protect the Home shepherds from becoming embroiled in the physical running of the Home, to avoid their neglecting the spiritual shepherding that they should focus on, that doesn't mean that we're setting the shepherds up as the "elders" or de facto heads of the Steering Council. All the members of the Steering Council should work as equals when it comes to making decisions.

**158. The members of the Steering Council are to work in good teamwork,** which is characterized by openness, good communication, willingness to listen to others, mutual respect, prayerfulness, asking the Lord and taking matters back to Him as needed, etc. If those in the Steering Council have disagreements about something, the Home shepherds do not have the last say. Differences of opinions need to be worked out through further prayer, discussion, and asking the Lord. If the members of the Steering Council are unable to come to a decision about something, if they have a tie vote and are deadlocked, then the decision in question would need to be brought to the Home Council.

**159. When we sought the Lord about this, He confirmed how important it is that the Home managers and shepherds work as equals so as to maintain balance in the Home.**

For a Home to operate smoothly and efficiently, both the spiritual and the practical must work together. Both are important for the Home to be a success—for the Home to develop as a winning team. Equality among the Steering Council members helps ensure that this balance is maintained. This concept of equality for the Steering Council members doesn't change the roles or realms of responsibilities of either of the two bodies; it's just that when the two bodies sit together, they are equal, with all members of the Council having an equal vote.

**160. It's important to realize that if Home shepherds are criteria monitors,** when they're in the Home shepherd meetings, their focus is the spiritual needs, direction, and shepherding of the whole Home; in such meetings they cannot put special emphasis or attention on the board they happen to be the monitor for to the neglect of the other criteria, unless there are spiritual aspects of that board's criteria that need attention and the Home shepherding body agrees that it should be on their agenda. The same applies to the Home managers. If those people are also criteria monitors, when they are in Home manager meetings, they must put on their "manager hats" so that they focus on the overall Home, the needs of all the boards, and are not prejudiced or pushing only the program of the board they monitor. Only if the Home shepherds and Home managers do this will the Home's projects, initiatives, and schedule be well balanced and able to meet all of the Home's needs.

**161. Of course, if a manager or shepherd is also a criteria monitor, it would be appropriate for that manager or shepherd to mention points regarding that set of criteria when in managers/shepherds meetings, Steering Council meetings, or Home Council meetings.** It's not that the manager or shepherd cannot bring up concerns, ideas or needs related to the criteria he monitors. But the members of the Steering

Council who are also criteria monitors need to be careful that they're not being imbalanced. All board criteria need to get a fair hearing, with none being neglected.

### **Clarifications regarding board criteria monitors**

**162. Criteria monitors are not in themselves responsible to make the Home do whatever is listed in the criteria of their boards.** They do not have any more authority regarding their board than the other members of their Home unless they are specifically given such authority by the Steering Council and Home Council. Overall, they are simply a "voice" in the Home, someone responsible to be thinking about that particular board, bringing up the needs of that board, reading the material supplied by the national, regional or international board, and doing their best to represent it in the Home, etc.

**163. Now, having said that, there might be people in your Home who are elected as criteria monitors who, in counsel with the Home shepherds and Home managers, can help to carry the load of fulfilling that board's set of criteria.** That's perfectly acceptable. In fact, that's to be encouraged, to spread the load on more shoulders, but under no circumstances should monitors "railroad" what they think needs to be done. Their position as a monitor doesn't automatically give them authority over others in the Home or in running the Home.

**164. The CS criteria monitor is automatically a member of the Home shepherd body, and that can be his only portfolio.** That person cannot monitor any other board criteria. All other members of either the Home shepherds or Home managers can hold up to two monitor positions, but no more than two. Similarly, the positions of criteria monitor can be held by members of the Home who are not part of the Steering Council, with the exception of the CS monitor position. The Home is free to elect the people who will fulfill these responsibilities as they see fit. The Steering Council is ultimately responsible to ensure that all the boards' criteria are fulfilled

in the Home, by the Home shepherds taking the spiritual criteria points and the Home managers taking the practical criteria points. What is spiritual and what is practical is to be determined by the Steering Council of each Home. It won't be uncommon for the practical and spiritual to overlap in certain criteria points, and you'll need to divvy up the responsibilities accordingly.

**165. The reason for having one of the Home shepherds be only the CS criteria monitor and no other is so that the CS board criteria will be one of the prime focuses of that shepherd.** The other shepherds and Home managers can take on other criteria monitor positions as determined by the Home. However, please be prayerful in your elections so as not to overload a few people with so much to do that they crumble under the weight or aren't able to get to their many responsibilities. That has been the tendency of the Family in the past, to keep heaping more and more responsibility on just a few people, those who seem to be the most capable or who have received some kind of training.

**166. You should realistically look at what the people in your Home are able to handle, and each person should also pray about this personally.** Some people may be capable enough to take on two monitor positions, especially if the positions are interlinked; in such a case, and depending on the makeup of your Home, it might be realistic for one person to take two positions. However, you don't want a few people in the Home carrying all the weight and responsibility to where they collapse under the pressure of it all, while others in the Home feel dissatisfied and unfulfilled, due to not having enough to do or not being challenged enough in their service for the Lord.

**167. The criteria monitor positions are wonderful opportunities to raise up new leaders and shepherds,** so Mama and I suggest you seriously consider having people who are not on the Steering Council help fill the monitor positions as much as possible. This could challenge those in your Home and make them feel like

they make a difference and that they're really contributing to helping your Home be a winning team.

**168. The Steering Council has ultimate responsibility to see that the criteria of all the boards are fulfilled,** and the Steering Council members will need to counsel amongst themselves as to how to separate the spiritual from the practical. But if those Steering Council members have other monitors who are not on the Council helping in these matters, it will spread the work on more shoulders and thus will lighten the weight for everyone.

### **Senior teens as criteria monitors**

**169. Senior teens can be criteria monitors for any board except the CS board.** (The reason for that restriction regarding the CS board is that the CS criteria monitor must be a Home shepherd, and therefore must be 18 or older.) Many senior teens will find challenge and training through being a monitor. How much of the responsibility a senior teen carries would depend on many things, especially the maturity of the teen. Some might fulfill the minimum responsibilities of a monitor, that of being a "voice" in the Home to bring various needs or lacks to the Steering Council's attention (either practical or spiritual) as they study the criteria, checklist, handbook, etc., provided by that board. Other senior teens could take more responsibility as a monitor, given to them by the Steering Council and Home Council, if they are capable and trustworthy.

**170. Here is some counsel from the Lord** that provides insight about the senior teens' needs and important counsel about how to go about allowing them to have the position of criteria monitor.

**171. (Jesus:) Many senior teens want to make a difference in the Family and their Homes.** I ask that you allow them to be able to do so in a way that's not too much for them and that allows them to grow into responsibility. Certainly the minimum responsibility of the

criteria monitors for all but the CS board is fine for senior teens to take on.

**172. Senior teens can be given more responsibility and be trained to carry a pretty big load in the Home, as long as it's clear that the buck stops with the Steering Council.**—As long as you acknowledge that senior teens are still learning a lot in their ministries and in their discipleship and they need time and allowance for all the things teens need, such as schooling, vocational training, time to enjoy the fellowship of their peers, relaxation and fun, time to attend and be a part of JT board events that are for them, etc. The minimum responsibility of the criteria monitor falls within these guidelines, but if consideration is given for these things, then senior teens could also take on more, depending on the situation and the individual senior teen's maturity and level of responsibility. That doesn't mean a Home must give the senior teens more responsibility, but there is room and flexibility for it.

**173. Your senior teens are voting members and a big part of your Home,** and making them feel a part of the Home and the Family, without overburdening them or giving them so much that they feel they can't also enjoy their youth, is a key in making them the disciples of the future and happy in the Family. *(End of message.)*

### **Boards and the criteria monitors**

**174. (Peter:)** If you have someone in your Home who is a board member, that does not mean that person would automatically be your Home's monitor for that board's criteria, as the jobs of a board member and a criteria monitor are different. A board member might or might not be the criteria monitor in your Home. You are not obligated to elect any board members who live in your Home to the respective criteria monitor positions, although in many cases it would probably make sense to elect that person to the position of monitor. You are free to elect whoever you choose as your criteria monitors in your Home, regardless of who in your Home is a board member.

**175. When boards wish to communicate with the Homes in their area, they are to send their messages to the Steering Council of each Home.** The shepherds and managers will then be responsible to pass the "all Homes" messages and advisories, etc., to the criteria monitor of each board. However, there could be some messages sent from a board to a Home that would not be passed on to the criteria monitor, if the messages are of a personal/confidential nature or deal with a situation that the monitor is not involved in.

**176. When we were praying about this, the Lord explained that the boards need to work through the Steering Council if they are going to have success.** It would not be wise to have the boards communicating solely or directly with the monitors, as there is the danger that there could be problems with conflicts of interest and authority in the Home. So direct communication from the boards to a Home should go through the Steering Council, and the shepherds or managers can pass things on to the monitor as needed, depending on the authority that each monitor has been given in the Home. This is better for the Home and better for the boards, too, because when it comes to specifics that they are communicating with a certain Home about, they need to be communicating with those who have the authority to implement their counsel, and that is the Steering Council.

**177. The criteria monitors do need to keep up with "all Homes" advisories, memos, and messages from the boards in order to be able to do their job.** Those communications fall within the minimum responsibility of the criteria monitors, so those should be given to the monitors by the Steering Council, but anything more than that doesn't fall within the minimum responsibility of the monitors, and therefore it would be the decision of the Steering Council to determine whether such other counsel from the boards would be passed on to the criteria monitor or not. This would depend on what responsibility the monitor has in the Home for carrying out things related to the board criteria that they monitor.

**178. Criteria monitors would not by default be the people to attend meetings, workshops, seminars or other such initiatives hosted by the boards.** Instead, the Steering Council would recommend who they feel should attend such events, and that recommendation would be confirmed by the vote of the Home Council. Of course, the boards are free to invite whoever they would like, but the final decision rests with the Homes. Sometimes this decision will vary from Home to Home depending on what the board is doing, who they are inviting, and what the needs are in the Home. In some cases, the criteria monitor would be the best choice to attend such board events, especially if they are active in assisting the Steering Council within the Home. In other cases, a Home manager or shepherd would be the best choice if they're more involved in implementing that board's criteria within their Home. In some situations, the best person might be neither a manager, shepherd or monitor.

### **Differentiating between the spiritual and the practical**

**179. You might find it rather difficult to differentiate between what is practical and what is spiritual in the board criteria.** We acknowledge that some points overlap, and determining what would fall to the shepherds and what would fall to the managers is not clear-cut; there are many gray points, as each Home's personnel is different and there will be a great variety of training in each Steering Council, as well as differences in how much responsibility has been granted to each criteria monitor in each Home.

**180. In light of this, we are leaving the actual distribution of the criteria and the decision of what you consider "spiritual" and what you consider "practical" to the Home shepherds and Home managers to determine.** The two bodies of shepherds and managers will be different in strength and talent in every Home, and according to the distribution of their gifts or talents, the criteria may be distributed a little

differently. This is not to say that the line between the two bodies should be blurred; it should not. The responsibilities of each body should be very definite and clear, but it's not easy for an outside source to delineate for everyone and every situation exactly what should be handled by whom.

**181. Therefore, we have determined that the Steering Council in each Home will need to sit down and work this out.** We can't micromanage the Homes to that degree by determining every little thing that each person should do. Each Steering Council will need to do that and be responsible for their decisions. It will take a bit of time for you Home shepherds and managers to tweak your modus operandi, but as you go to the Lord for His guidance, solutions, and answers, He will show you how to handle situations that arise where there is an overlap between the spiritual and the practical.

### **Training the managers too**

**182. It could seem rather unfair or imbalanced to you that there are Home shepherds and Home managers, and they are supposed to be equals on the Steering Council, and yet the Home shepherds will be receiving training from the coaches.** The logical question is, "Who will train the managers?" That's a legitimate concern.

**183. At this time some members of WS are committed to begin work on a checklist how-to aid for the Home managers.** This how-to aid would be an immediate stopgap measure to give the Home managers some instruction and guidance. Then with time, we hope to pull together a team that will prepare a handbook for the Home managers, similar to how most boards are preparing handbooks for their boards.

### **Coaches and the board structure**

**184. Speaking of training the Home shepherds, I want to reiterate that coaches are to train the shepherds in the spiritual shepherding of the Home,** particularly in fulfilling the CS board criteria and in personally shepherding the members of the Home. That does not, however,

cover the full responsibility of the Home shepherds. They, as a body, are also responsible for seeing that the Home fulfills the spiritual aspects of the other boards' criteria as well. That naturally raises the question as to whether coaches are supposed to be well trained and experienced in every aspect of spiritual shepherding, including all the details of children, parents, JETTs and teens, outside members, etc. The short answer to that question is no. We cannot and do not expect coaches to be the all in all in shepherding, with experience, knowledge, gifts and wisdom in every aspect of spiritual shepherding.

**185. We do not want to broaden the coaches' mandate.** They are to focus on training the Home shepherds in the general principles of shepherding the members of the Home, as well as in how to fulfill the CS board criteria and how to work together in their little team in unity and good teamworking. There will likely be situations that come up in a Home regarding the spiritual criteria of boards other than the CS board, such as JT or CP, that your coach will not know how to handle, other than giving you general Word-based counsel. In that case, it is the responsibility of the Home shepherds to communicate with the other boards. Home shepherds should not expect their coach to know everything or to have all the answers. If something falls outside the coach's expertise and experience, then the coach should not try to muddle through; he or she should simply refer the Home shepherds to the other boards for counsel.

**186. Here is some counsel from the Lord on this concept,** which will take some time to get used to and learn to apply:

**187. (Jesus:) I'm not requiring that the coaches have all the answers to every shepherding problem that arises in the Home.** That is unrealistic, and if you had to find people of this nature, you would find that you come up very short on having enough coaches for each Home. This is one of the main reasons that I inspired the creation of the board structure—so

that those who have talents in certain areas can be a help and strength to others in that particular aspect, whether or not they are in a leadership position.

**188. So you have concluded correctly that the coaches will not need to be pros in each of these aspects that a Home could come up against,** and it would be best that the coach direct the Home to the board pillar that focuses on that aspect of things. The coach shouldn't be the one who communicates with the board, but he should rather encourage the Home shepherds themselves to do it so they will have a direct line of communication with the board rather than the coach being the middleman, which will only increase the job of the coach.

**189. It is ultimately the Home shepherds' responsibility to get the help they need from the board.** In certain cases it could be beneficial for the coach to see the board's communication with the Home so they know what counsel is being given in case any follow-up is needed (if it's in regards to a shepherding matter).

**190. But it is very important that the Home gets that direct link with the board themselves rather than running to the coach with all their problems that are outside the coach's mandate and realm of authority or anointing.** It will also be a good sample to the Homes to see that the coach is abiding in his calling of being a spiritual shepherd, not someone who is trying to keep a finger in every pie.

**191. I'm leading those in My Family to become more focused on the calling that I have given them and to specialize in one thing rather than being weighed down with everything.** So if the coach just humbly tells the Home shepherds that he doesn't have all the answers and that they should write to another board pillar, that will help the Home shepherds to realize that they, too, don't need to be the all in all for their Home in every little matter. It shows the importance of teamworking and relying on each others' gifts and talents to be a well-rounded and successful team. (*End of message.*)

## **Home size: Don't stop building your winning team**

**192. (Peter:)** You will likely run into some complications as you first implement this new structure for the spiritual and practical running of your Home. It will be a learning experience. You might feel frustrated and think this isn't practical, because more of your Home members will now be involved in the actual running of the Home and the decision-making, either from the practical or shepherding side. We realize that many Homes only have six members age 18 and over, and in many cases all those people would hold a position or positions under this new plan. You might feel this will be confusing or impractical on a day-to-day basis. But please understand that we're building for the future; we're building for the Family of tomorrow. We aren't just trying to patch up the old and merely get by; we're determined to find the Lord's will regarding what's needed for the strengthened, progressing Family of the future when we have bigger Homes, more Active members, larger outside churches, etc.

**193. We asked the Lord if we had found His highest will on how to maintain the organization and practical running of the Home,** but also accomplish the goal of having increased consistent spiritual shepherding. We counseled extensively with the IBCs about this, and prayed about it. We also communicated with all the RSs several times to seek their input before finalizing the decision. When praying about it initially, the Lord said:

**194. (Jesus:)** This arrangement will put the Homes on the road to progress, and it provides a good balance between spiritual shepherding and keeping the Home going practically. You can't have a Home that only focuses on spiritual shepherding, but neither can a Home only focus on the practical. You have to have both. And since you can be pretty sure the Homes will take care of the practical, since that absolutely has to be done to make

sure the children are cared for, the meals are cooked, and the bills are paid, the thing you need to guard and put more attention toward is the spiritual shepherding. That is the side that has been neglected, and that's what you'll have to push more to emphasize, oversee, monitor, and make sure it takes root in the Homes.

**195. There will be a time of adjustment to this new plan,** and the Homes' first reactions will be to think it's too complicated or top-heavy. But don't worry, because after they get used to it and adjust, they'll see that it actually works quite well.

**196. This program will work well in bigger Homes, but it will also be good for smaller Homes.** It will show the Homes that you're serious when you say that six voting members (18+) is the minimum. They really need to change their mindsets, as they're still in the vein that just squeaking by with six voting members is okay, that they've finally "arrived," but that's not the way they should look at it at all; they should be seeking for a bigger and more well-balanced Home. I will provide the personnel, housing, and all that they need. This requirement for more people in the oversight of the Home—both in the practical and spiritual realms—will confirm to them that they need a bigger Home with more members to fill the various slots so everything is overseen properly, all angles are covered, and no one is overloaded.

**197. Separating the responsibilities and the running of the Home into the spiritual and practical aspects will help strengthen the overall standard of the Home,** for it will put more emphasis on the spiritual shepherding that has been sorely lacking over these last years. You need both of these aspects in order to create a well-rounded Home and work. This change will give both the spiritual shepherding and the practical running of the Home sufficient focus and attention so that both are duly represented and flowing smoothly, which will ensure the forward progress of the Home and help it to be the winning team of solid disciples that I wish for them to be.



**198. Separating the managerial duties from the spiritual ones will help each body to devote more time, prayer, and focus to their responsibilities,** and thus I have led you to set up this Steering Council of Home managers and Home shepherds. Until now, the teamworks of the past have focused more on the practical duties, because these things are more “in your face” (e.g., if you don’t have a schedule, the Home can’t operate), and therefore much that the teamwork did was running through the wings to take care of this and that.

**199. Those who were supposed to be shepherds didn’t have sufficient time to devote in My temple,** sitting at My feet, hearing My Words and praying about the overall spiritual condition of the Home and its members. This needs to change, and by having Home managers, this will help to spread out the load on more shoulders so that the shepherds can devote sufficient time and attention to the important job of shepherding. (*End of message.*)

**200. (Peter:) We will review this new structure in the first part of 2006, and we’ll be able to make any changes or adjustments needed.** Undoubtedly there will be tweaks and adjustments to be made as we see how this new system plays out, but it’s pretty sure that something along these lines will stay in place for a fairly long time, so Mama’s and my advice to you is to take heed to the Lord’s counsel to try to increase the size of your Home.

**201. As we said almost a year ago, having six members (18+) is the minimum; it’s not the ideal.** (ML #3479:95–96, GN 1067). To have a really effective Home that covers all the bases well and is a tremendously powerful sample of full-time discipleship, you need more than six people. So don’t stop building your winning team when you’ve barely made it to the minimum; keep finding the personnel you need so that your Home can be well organized and well shepherded, as well as meet the criteria of all the boards along with your personal Home goals!

## **Timing of Home elections—March 2005**

**202. As mentioned earlier, we would like to ask that you change the normal schedule for Home elections for early 2005.** Rather than holding elections in February as you normally would, we’d like to ask that for the first Home elections in 2005, you hold them in early March, shortly after the Feast. The reason for this change is that you will already be busy in February with the study month and the Feast, and we don’t want to overload you with another project that could be time consuming.

**203. These elections in March 2005 will be the first time you will implement the counsel in this GN,** electing first your Home shepherds, then your Home managers and then your board criteria monitors. (The new Election Procedures will reach you, Lord willing, by February.)

**204. One other factor related to the elections is that the Feast this year will consist of “workshops” for each board.** It would have been ideal to have had your board criteria monitors in place for these workshops. It seemed, however, that that would have put too much strain on your Home, with these new shepherding changes being implemented too quickly. You need time to think and pray about these changes, to understand the counsel in this GN, and to become familiar with the board criteria, so the pros of having the Home elections early were outweighed by the cons that such a fast-moving timetable presented.

**205. We did come up with some kind of a “happy medium,” Lord willing, which, if you can do this, will help your workshops during the Feast to be more fruitful.** In order to facilitate following up on ideas or any decisions made as a result of the workshops, we suggest that you have a couple of people specifically tune in to each board workshop. One of these people could be assigned to take notes in the workshop so that you have a record of ideas, decisions, problems that need solutions, goals, deadlines, etc., from each workshop.

**206. What’s everybody’s job is nobody’s job, so it would be wise for your Home to assign people or ask for volunteers who will**

**make a certain board workshop their focus during the Feast.** (Depending on the size of your Home, people might need to be tuning in to a couple of workshops during the Feast; but if you have enough people, strive to assign one person per workshop.) All the criteria will be read by everyone in the Home, but it's a lot to absorb and digest, so if you have different Home members really focusing on particular pillars, then this will probably ensure that your workshops bear lasting fruit. It is logical that the people who would volunteer or be appointed to take notes during the board workshops would be possible criteria monitor candidates for that particular board come election time.

### **Who to elect as your Home shepherds**

**207. All Home members will need to be reeducated as to the role of the Home shepherds and what kind of people you should vote into this position,** those you feel will be able to spiritually shepherd your Home and the individuals in it. You will need to understand that these shepherds will need to have time available to actually shepherd the members of your Home, pray about things, and hear from the Lord. Every FD disciple will need to understand that shepherding is actually a job that needs to be done in every Home that wants to be a winning team.

**208. The Home shepherds themselves are also going to need to rewire their thinking,** because for so many years the present teamworks' focus has been on management much more than spiritual shepherding. The majority of their work has been table tending, doing deacon work, with many leaving the problems and shepherding within their Home to the VSSs. But now they're going to have to face the problems, dig into situations within their Home that need shepherding, and actually do something about it. They're going to have to spiritually shepherd.

**209. This will mean that as spiritual shepherds they will need to learn new skills,** the proper use of prophecy in shepherding, the

balance between love and discipline, how to spot spiritual problems when they are small and to do something about them before they grow into a major disruption in a person's life or in the Home. They'll need to learn how to draw out people's ideas and views, as Dad taught us about pumping people power in "The Wise and Unwise Leader," as opposed to feeling they have to be in control and have the last say because they're the spiritual shepherds. They'll need to learn proper people-handling skills, about having faith for people, about not being self-righteous, how to keep a Home and the individuals in it moving forward spiritually, how to have feeding devotions and spiritual meetings based on the needs of the Home, and more.

**210. There is a great deal they must learn in order to be able to do the job right.** As mentioned earlier, the coaches will be focusing on training the Home shepherds to do all these things.

### **Home shepherds and Home accountability**

**211. The portfolio of the Home shepherds will be to make sure the CS board criteria are fulfilled in the Home,** as well as to be responsible to see that the spiritual shepherding aspects of the other board criteria are also fulfilled. You might wonder how this works with the concept of Home accountability. Here is the Lord's explanation on this.

**212. (Jesus:) The entire spiritual state of the Home should be the concern and responsibility of the Home shepherds.** That doesn't mean that those two or three people alone can make the Home be in tiptop shape spiritually, because that will depend on the choices of all the Home members. The Home will be what the Home members make it. A Home can't only depend on the Home shepherds to make it spiritually strong. The Home shepherds need to do all they can, they need to be faithful with their responsibilities and portfolio, but the spiritual state of the Home is not within their power to

control. The state of the Home is the picture of the state of the Home members, including the choices of the Home members. The state of the Home is a result of the collective decisions of the Home members.

**213. So while the Home shepherds are responsible to do their job, to fulfill their mandate to shepherd spiritually, the concept of Home accountability is still very relevant.** Home shepherds must be willing to shepherd the Home members, but just as importantly, the Home members must be willing to be shepherded. And everyone must be striving to be obedient, uncompromised, yielded, and dropped out of the System. Every member must be doing all that is possible to live the life of a full-time disciple.

**214. So that’s the balance between the responsibility of the Home shepherds and the concept of Home accountability.** You have to have both so that the Home shepherds will do their job in giving the Home the shepherding it needs, and yet the state of the Home is the ultimate responsibility of all the members. (*End of message.*)

**215. (Peter:)** This means that the Home shepherds need to do all they can to make sure the Home is doing well spiritually, that the Home members are well shepherded, that they’re following the Word, and that the criteria of the CS board are being fulfilled. The Home shepherds don’t have to do every bit of spiritual shepherding themselves, if there are other people in the Home who can help to carry that load. But it’s the responsibility of the Home shepherds to know the state of their flock and to make sure that the spiritual shepherding is being taken care of—either by themselves or by others.

**216. However, the overall state of the Home cannot be “controlled” by the Home shepherds.** Each person in the Home is accountable, because each person’s spiritual state, choices, and personal decisions, as well as the Home’s collective decisions, affect the overall spirit and progress of the Home. This is the essence of Home accountability. So you as an

individual cannot shrug off your responsibility for the spiritual state of your Home, thinking it’s solely the Home shepherds’ job to make sure your Home is spiritually strong. It’s your job and responsibility too. You are accountable.

### **Why more spiritual shepherding?**

**217. Some of you might be a little resistant to this idea of more spiritual shepherding, for various reasons.** You might feel that it complicates the running of your Home, or that too many people will be involved in the shepherding of your Home. You also might fear that your Home shepherds will really be “in your face,” encroaching on your freedoms, butting their noses into your private life, and generally cramping your style and making your life miserable. You might fear that this will be a throwback to too much control, or that mistakes will be made by immature or inexperienced shepherds. You might dread the thought of your Home getting bogged down in a lot of administration and meetings that make everything very cumbersome and slow.

**218. Those are legitimate concerns, in some ways, and we all want to avoid those downsides to this new program.** We’re not saying that things will run smoothly from the start and that there won’t be some elements of these problems, but we do hope to keep them to a minimum. One thing we all need to realize is that we absolutely, without a doubt, need to change. We can’t keep going with things as they are. In order to do that, things will be a bit rocky for a while as you get used to the new structure and learn to work with it well. Mistakes will be made; things might get a little complicated for a while. But that’s okay. You can’t expect that your Home will run perfectly smoothly from day one, and that your Home shepherds will be overnight wonders. It will take time.

**219. But also bear in mind, as I brought out in the first part of this series, that we will review this program in the early part of 2006,** and if it’s not working well or if there are adjustments that need to be made, we can change things. I’ll be the first to admit that not every

single possible snag has been ironed out. There will be hiccups. But again, we need to change, we need to revamp what clearly is not working, and we need to pioneer. The Lord has shown us to make these changes, He's confirmed them, and all the RSs have been consulted and have agreed to try this, so we just need to give it our best shot and see how it goes.

**220. Mama and I believe this will be a great improvement and will do much to strengthen your Homes.** We trust that in spite of some complications or growing pains, these changes will help the FD Homes to be better balanced, and to place proper emphasis on spiritual shepherding while maintaining good organization and practical oversight.

**221. Remember, as Mama said, “If the spirit is right, the work will be right.”** In other words, if the spirit of your Home and Home members is strong, obedient, full of faith, praiseful, etc., then the other aspects of your Home in the practical and other ministries will be right and will have the Lord's blessing. Granted, you may need some training or counsel in organization or some practical aspects of Home life, and that's to be expected, as life is a learning and growing process. But if the spirit is right and you have the Lord's blessing, then you're firmly on the path to fruitfulness and progress in all areas, including the practical aspects of your Home and work. So, how do you get that right spirit? Largely through spiritual shepherding.

**222. We asked the Lord how it is that a Home can be pretty “perfect” in organization and outward appearance,** but without spiritual shepherding there is a loss—and what is that loss?

**223. We need to have a full turnaround in our mindsets regarding spiritual shepherding.** Your Home will need Home shepherds who are actually willing to do the shepherding, not just tend tables; and you will need to be willing to receive it and to not think that the shepherds are encroaching on your privacy or overstepping their authority.

**224. We all need to see that spiritual shepherding is a key to being a winning team in every way.** Without making these mindset changes, you'll likely just keep going along pretty much as you are now, with the new Home governing structure being implemented in the “letter of the law.” We need more than that; we need a real turnaround. Here is a message from Dad that might help you see how important this is.

**225. (Dad:) Dear Family, I've been admiring your faith and determination and perseverance in making all the new changes,** moving and shifting Homes, changing your ways of operating, overcoming your past bad habits and weaknesses, restructuring your lives and Homes and areas and the Family as a whole. You've made wonderful progress, and I'm proud of you, and so is the Lord and the rest of the “great cloud of witnesses” who are watching and applauding your efforts!

**226. You've made real progress and gained great victories in the year of restructuring, and you can look forward to new heights and even greater victories in the year of strengthening, thank the Lord!** The boards are really taking off and the criteria they've put together give you specific, explicit goals that you can shoot for in every major area of your Home life and outreach. And since you have these specific goals, which you can refer to and check yourself on, and be checked on in the Home review, you'll find yourselves hitting the mark more in many more areas. If you've found the goals a little fuzzy in the past, or there've been so many that you weren't sure what ones to aim for, that's no longer the case anymore. Now you can practice aiming for the center of God's will every time and become expert marksmen.

**227. In all your sharpshooting, though, don't forget the overall purpose of the board criteria or the restructuring as a whole:** It's to make your Homes places where real discipleship is nurtured and where it grows and thrives, where your love for God and your fellow man is put into action, and where you bear much fruit! The

restructuring isn't just to make you do things in a new and different way, change for the sake of change, or a bunch of new board criteria just for the sake of new rules, regulations, and goals.

**228. The purpose is to make you better disciples,** to make your Homes better discipleship Homes, and to make the Family as a whole a better sample of the Lord's full-time discipleship. It's important that you keep that in mind.

**229. You won't become better disciples merely by keeping every jot and tittle of the new criteria.** They're important, yes, but they're not the all in all. Obedience is important, but real discipleship is also a matter of the heart, a matter of the spirit, a matter of love and mercy and humility and yieldedness. Those things are vital as well. You can have obedience and even great gifts and talents, but if it's not from the heart, if the heart isn't right and real love isn't present, then it falls into the category of "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals"—which avails nothing in the end.

**230. What's my point here?** The point is that making all these necessary practical changes is good, as is obeying all the new board criteria, but they're not enough in themselves. Your Home can't just perfect itself organizationally or practically; to make real progress, to become the winning teams of disciples that you need to be, you're going to have to work on the spiritual aspects of your Home as well.

**231. "How do we do that?" you ask. "And haven't we been doing that?** We try to read and obey the Letters, and we're making progress in overcoming bad attitudes since 'Choices and Consequences' and the 'Shooting Straight' series came out, and we've gone through a period of renewal. So what do we lack?"

**232. It's true, you've made a lot of progress.** In fact, you're going great guns and I'm proud of you, as I said! This isn't a scolding here, just some very necessary instruction and counsel—in fact, something that's vital if you're going to become and remain winning teams.

**233. Something you must have, if your Homes are to be real discipleship Homes, is**

**a willingness on the part of the shepherds to shepherd, and a willingness on the part of the Home members to be shepherded.** That's what's going to keep you winning teams, help you to be the disciples you need to be, and make your Home the discipleship Home that the Lord wants and needs it to be!

**234. You see, it's the nature of fleshly carnal man to drift a bit after a while.** So even if you begin by working together in love and unity, keeping every aspect of the criteria and really wanting to make the restructuring work, you're just human, to put it simply. After a while, without oversight and shepherding, little problems of strife and disunity crop up, unedifying influences are no longer minimized as much as they used to be, weaknesses and besetting sins aren't resisted as they were in the past, personal relations take a turn for the worse, children and young people develop bad habits or problems, and your spiritual state begins to slip some, despite your best intentions. As I've said in the past, you have to fight your old self and the Enemy every day, and it is a fight!

**235. Unless you keep up the fight and keep overcoming your old man and the Old Boy himself, you sink.** And as you sink, you affect others, and they can start to sink, too, and your Home can start to sink. If you don't take action to stop the sinking, then you'll find yourself sinking out of the Family altogether, and I know you don't want that. That's the point of the restructuring—to go up rather than down, to pull ourselves out of the state that many of our Homes were sinking into before.

**236. Now to do that, you're going to have to take action at the Home level.** Unless you Home shepherds are willing to accept your responsibility to spiritually shepherd your flock, then you're going to find your Home in the same state it was before the restructuring, despite all the changes in the Family. And unless you Home members are willing to accept their shepherding, you're going to wind up in the same state.

**237. You see, the changes in the Family as a whole aren't enough. You have to change**

**as well.** Your Home has to change. The way you've done things in the past has to change! Your ways of looking at shepherding have to change! If not, then the other changes won't be sufficient. You won't remain the disciples you need to be, and your Homes won't continue to be the discipleship Homes you want them to be, that they were intended to be.

**238. Shepherds, if you're not willing to gently and lovingly correct your Home members when they go astray, then sooner or later others will follow them.** You'll lose your flock after a while, or you yourself will go astray, following them, because you weren't willing to forsake your pride and do the hard but loving job of shepherding. Remember, it's a loving job as well. "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth." Whom the Lord loves, He shepherds. If you love your Home members, you'll shepherd them. If you love the Lord and want the best for His work, you'll shepherd them.

**239. And dear Home members, if you're not willing to overcome your pride and sensitivity and be shepherded, then you'll only go further and further astray.** Just as your shepherds need to have a change of heart, a change of mind, and a change of attitude to be willing to take up the gentle and loving staff of shepherding again, you need to be willing to accept that shepherding.

**240. Don't look on it as some terrible, horrible, evil thing that you're being shepherded,** that you're being asked why you're doing this, or if some decision is the best course of action, or if you'd considered this or that in the Word, or if you've heard from the Lord about a decision you're making. If you love the Lord and want to do your best for Him and be your best for the Family, look upon it as instruction in the way of righteousness. Look upon it as godly counsel and help. Look upon it as good, not bad. Look upon it as a blessing, not a terrible thing to be dreaded and avoided.

**241. I mean, whose righteousness are you trying to attain to anyway?** You're a sinner, just as your shepherd is a sinner, just as every man

and woman on Earth is a sinner. If your shepherd or your co-worker or one of your peers comes up to you with a little counsel or correction in some way, try to swallow your pride and say, "Thank you. I appreciate that. I didn't realize that, but now that I know how I'm doing or how you and others feel I'm doing, I'll take it to the Lord and try to do better."

**242. It's your Family, and it's what you make it!** If you want to make your Home the best it can be, then you'll want to be the best you can be. If you want to make the Family the best it can be, then you'll want to be the best you can be. Look on shepherding as a way to make progress, not some horrendous stroke of the hatchet to be avoided at all costs, an intrusion on your privacy and independence. That's not the way it is, and that's not the way you should look at it.

**243. And shepherds, if you don't want your Home members to look at it that way, then you shouldn't make it that way.** You shouldn't wait until problems have progressed so far that you absolutely have to apply a drastic amount of shepherding. Shepherding is a day-to-day affair, a little question or conversation now and then, a gentle nudging of the staff every once in a while when you see that a Home member is starting to stray more and more. If you're more faithful to shepherd a little on a daily basis, then you won't have to shepherd so much later on.

**244. So, dear folks, shepherds and Home members alike, to make this Family the Family of disciples and disciple winners that it needs to be,** you've also got to be willing to shepherd and receive shepherding, to ask the Lord and others for help to make the personal changes you need, and to accept those personal changes when they come. You are the Family, and as you change in these areas, the Family itself will change. Okay?

**245. I know you can do it, because the Lord told me you can.** Give it a try and prove Him right, and make Him and us happy, and make your Home and the world a better place. I love you! (*End of message.*)

### **Spiritual shepherding is a ministry!**

**246. (Peter:) As I mentioned earlier, the Family needs a change of mindset regarding spiritual shepherding.** We need to look at it as a ministry, one that takes time, prayer, and consistent attention. Just as your Home collectively devotes a significant number of hours to teaching the children, going out witnessing, provisioning, maintaining your house and property, etc., likewise your Home shepherds will need to sink some serious time into the spiritual shepherding of your Home. This ministry involves not just occasional walkie talkies with people every month. To properly shepherd a Home takes time and prayer, it takes hearing from the Lord in prophecy, it takes planning and regularity.

**247. I discussed at length with various ones the idea of putting a minimum number of hours required for the job of the Home shepherds,** or a specific percentage of their time that would need to be given to this ministry, but we concluded that that would not be very practical or workable, since the circumstances in each Home vary so much. But in our discussion we realized that it's very possible that unless you're careful and prayerful, and unless you try to protect your Home shepherds' time, that you could have people who hold the title of Home shepherd but who don't do the job, because of lack of time.

**248. For example, if a Home shepherd is also one of your main teachers or witnesses,** or if he or she is a monitor for another board or a board member or chairperson, or if he or she is the only driver or provisioner ... well, I'm sure you get the drift. If you as a Home don't arrange your Home schedule and duties so that you can actually free up your Home shepherds to spend time shepherding, then you will not benefit very much from their help. Not only that, but you might really miss some very important input, direction and guidance that the Lord would want to give them, but He can't because they have no time to listen and hear from Him.

**249. You who are willing to take on the position of Home shepherd are responsible to look at your schedule and other responsibilities**

**and see if you can do the job.** If you can't, then you should either delegate some of your other responsibilities to others, or your Home should find someone else to take your place as a Home shepherd. It's really not fair to your Home for you to have the title if you're not willing or able to do the job. Again, as I said, spiritual shepherding is a ministry, and it requires time.

**250. That's not to say that you can't do anything else in the Home,** that you can't carry any load in the physical or practical, that you can't teach the children, cook meals, or go out witnessing. Mama and I realize that especially in small Homes, each person has to carry a certain load for the Home to be well balanced. But it's very likely that if you are elected to be one of the Home shepherds of your Home, you're not going to be able to carry the same load as you did before, because we know that everyone is busy, everyone is maxed out. It's not like you had a whole bunch of "free time" before you were elected to be Home shepherd that you can now devote to shepherding. You're going to have to find time, and to do that you'll probably have to rearrange your duties, priorities, and schedule.

**251. We are not disallowing Home shepherds from serving on the board structure as a board member or chairperson, because we don't want to weaken the board structure.** We also don't want to restrict which other criteria monitor positions the other Home shepherd(s) can take (meaning the Home shepherd who is not the CS monitor). But please understand that the onus is on your Home overall, and you Home shepherds personally, to make sure your Home shepherds have time to do the job. Otherwise, it could really hurt the forward movement of your Home. We're counting not just on Home accountability, but also Home sense-ability—trusting that you'll find Home shepherds who can and will put the time needed into this important ministry.

**252. (Jesus:) What is shepherding?** In the most basic form, you could say that it's caring for others, helping make sure that their needs are met, and assisting them or helping them to live

according to My Word. I have said that you're all supposed to be shepherds of one another, and that is true. When you are truly your "brother's keeper," you are in essence shepherding. So you could say that simply by keeping a general eye out for anyone who needs help or their needs met, and by talking to those who come to you for counsel and assistance, you are shepherding. And, in its basic form that I expect of all Family disciples, that's true.

**253. But what is "Home shepherding"? What does it mean to be a "Home shepherd"?** Should you look at it in the same way?—Fixing things (spiritual issues or needs) that you happen to notice need it, and if someone happens to want to talk to you, giving them some of your time squeezed in between everything else? No! If that is your concept of Home shepherding—something that you try to fit in the spare moments here and there—then you won't have a well-shepherded Home, and therefore you'll either wind up with an unhappy Home, a compromised Home, or a non-Family discipleship Home!

**254. Being a Home shepherd is a specific job that has specific responsibilities, just as any other ministry does.** I won't list all of those responsibilities in this message, since you're getting that elsewhere; but I'll touch on the general principles. If you're a "teacher" in the Home, does that mean that you squeeze in a few minutes here and there to teach the children, or that the only time you correct them is if they're risking death by crossing a busy street, or the only time you give them assistance is if they happen to ask you a question? No, you wouldn't even think of being a "teacher" in that way. Your children would certainly not be well taught.

**255. So why should a "shepherd" be any less?** Why should a Home shepherd approach his or her job with any less professionalism, time, and prayer invested than a teacher, or a witnesser, or a kitchen deacon? I don't think any of you would say that shepherding is less important than running the kitchen, but yet the way many of you go about fulfilling the job, one would think that it was. In fact, the way many

Homes have been shepherded, and many Home shepherds have done their jobs these past years, one would have the impression that it's one of those "optional vocations."

**256. It's a good thing you haven't had the same approach to the job of cooking or running the kitchen, or the Family would have died of starvation!** And the sad thing is that the Family nearly did die of starvation—spiritual starvation—not because of a lack of spiritual food, or even a lack of eating that spiritual food in the form of mandated Word time, but from a lack of digesting it and assimilating it, and receiving help and shepherding so that it would keep them strong and alive. The Family has backed off from the edge of danger, but it could slip back into that spot without too much difficulty if the job of shepherding isn't treated as a job and ministry of importance.

**257. I'm not trying to make the point that shepherding is more important than making sure your Home runs properly,** that you have food on the table, that you get out witnessing and your kids are taught. Those are essential too. But the problem is that the importance that shepherding has been given hasn't even come up to the level of these other matters, because people haven't looked at shepherding as a job in itself, a ministry within the Home. If you just squeezed in witnessing here or there when you could without actually allotting time for it as a ministry, then you wouldn't get much done (and that has been a problem with some Homes too). So it is with shepherding; you have to both treat it as a ministry and allot the time needed to make it happen.

**258. As a shepherd, you have to set aside specific time for fulfilling your shepherding responsibilities, just as a witnesser has to set aside time for witnessing, or a teacher for teaching.** And those in the Home have to grant you that time for shepherding. And shepherding doesn't just mean going around correcting people when they need it. Most of shepherding is seeking Me and hearing from Me about the spiritual direction of your Home, whether I want you to do anything



different in the Home that would strengthen the Home spiritually, as well as hearing from Me about individuals in the Home and whether their needs are being met, whether there's anything that they're going through which you as the shepherd can help them with, or even just praying for them. Of course, it involves talking, counseling, and interacting with others too. But if the shepherd isn't spending time with Me, the Great Shepherd, then he won't be a good shepherd for long, and the flock will suffer as a result.

**259. So when it comes to electing your Home shepherds, or to being Home shepherds, really stop and pray and think about the job.** Approach it as a new ministry that you're taking on, and invest the time accordingly. How much time should you invest? That varies according to the need—at times it could be a lot, at other times it might not be as much. There are many factors that will determine that, and if you're in prayer and seeking Me, I will show you how much time to spend on it. But one thing I can say for sure, and that is if you're spending hardly any time on it, or very little on a regular basis, then you're most definitely not spending enough time at your ministry. If you're too busy with other things in the Home or outside of your Home to where you don't have time to invest in your Home shepherding ministry, then you need to rearrange accordingly so that you do. Otherwise you might as well give the ministry to someone else. And if everyone in the Home is so busy that no one has time for this ministry, then your Home will eventually sink spiritually. You don't want that to happen. So please don't neglect this important ministry! It's one of your vital lifelines to discipleship.

**260. I understand that you Home shepherds have a lot of other things that you need to take care of.** Especially in a smaller Home you'll have other jobs or ministries in the Home, and you can't afford to spend all of your time shepherding. In situations like that, you'll have to juggle your ministries. But be very careful that you don't put a priority on your other ministries to the neglect of shepherding. If you're a Home shepherd, then that has become your most impor-

tant ministry, and you should be allotting a good portion of your time to that ministry if it is to be done correctly. That might mean delegating some of your previous responsibilities and ministries to others in the Home. In other cases it might mean building a bigger team so that you have enough people to man all the bases—especially if you're a very small Home of only six or seven adults.

**261. But whatever you have to do, whatever you have to change, whatever you have to work out, you can't afford to neglect your most important duty as a Home shepherd, and that is shepherding.** And by shepherding I mean the responsibilities of a shepherd as outlined by the CS board.

**262. And as Home members, protect your Home shepherds!** Protect their time so that they can have time to shepherd you and the Home. Shepherding is vital to your success as a Home, so it's in your best interests to do so. The better they can do their job, the better you will be able to do your job, and the better off the Home as a whole will be. So try to make it easy for them to find the time to do their job. Well, it may never be "easy," as it's always difficult to find time for anything, but do what you can, and at the very least don't make it harder than it already is!

**263. I know that being a Home shepherd is not an easy job, and now on top of it I'm asking you to actually invest adequate time in the job.** But it's one of those keys to success if you are to have a winning team and be a fruitful and happy and blessed discipleship Home. If that's your goal, then investing time and energy into this ministry is one of the vital elements to get you there. So start shepherding and strengthening your winning team today! It'll be time well spent and you won't regret it! (*End of message.*)

### **The first Home review**

**264. (Peter:)** You read in "Forward, Always Forward!" (ML #3479, GN 1067) that **there would be a type of Home review.** The first one is due to take place in April of 2005. We ask that you take the time then to fill out the Home review report from each board and send them to your

regional desk, which will pass them on to the regional chairperson of each board. The meetings that you hold to fill out the Home report forms for each board will take the place of all the required Charter meetings for the month of April.

**265. How much or how little these reports will be evaluated is yet to be determined.** Unlike future reviews, where your Regional shepherds will get back to you with a grade, with this review you will not hear back from your Regional shepherds with a final grade. You may or may not hear back from the regional chairperson of the boards, giving you an indication of how you are doing in that board pillar. This will be up to your regional board chairpersons to decide, but it is not something that is required for them to do, because some of the regional chairpersons will be involved in major timely projects at the time when those reports will be evaluated and therefore might not have the time to communicate with each Home.

**266. The reason we still want to go ahead with this review, even though it may not be officially graded like future reviews will be,** is so that you can have a trial run, like a self-evaluation. (More details on this “grading” concept will come later, in 2005.)

**267. By filling in the review forms, you should be able to assess how you’re doing in each pillar.** If you see that you’re answering a lot of questions with one of the lower multiple-choice answers, please take note of those weak areas and work to improve them.

### **A special anointing for the year of strengthening**

**268. I know there’s a lot happening in each of your Homes and lives.** We’re all busy and stretched about as far as we can go. The battles are intense and many people are being tested in big ways. Things are moving fast, there’s a lot being expected of each one of us, and I wouldn’t be surprised if you wonder if you’re going to make it if things keep going at this rate. As you know, the Lord doesn’t ask anything of us without giving us the means to accomplish His challenges. He understands even better than we do what we’re

up against, and what we will face in the days to come. He knows our human weaknesses. He knows that we of ourselves can do nothing.

**269. This next message explains more about the year of strengthening**—not just what we can expect, but it also talks of a very special gift that the Lord wants to give us, a gift that will be crucial to our future success. Please receive this gift, cherish it, guard it, and believe that you have it. It will make all the difference in the world for you and your Home.

**270. (Jesus:) No two years are ever the same.** I am a moving, changing God. I am never still, never stagnant, never stuck in a rut, never confined to a mold. If there’s anything you should be praising and thanking Me for right now, it’s that My nature is one of change, of revolution. It is one of My greatest desires, My loves, that you not only accept this part of My personality and makeup, but that you actually desire it, love it, and thrill to the changes My Spirit brings into your life, your Home, and to the Family as a whole.

**271. Throughout the year to come, the year of strengthening, you will see this side of Me more than ever before.** I am not going to hide the facts. I will challenge you; I will require more of you. I will get you moving in the spirit. I will shake up the apple cart. All of this is necessary in order for the strengthening to occur. It’s like you can’t expect to get strong in the physical and build up physical muscles if you’re not willing to work out, to push yourself, and to change your lifestyle in order to accommodate your new workout regimen.

**272. In the physical realm you don’t get strong by sitting still, by being lethargic, or by going on with business as usual.** You have to put forth the effort, you have to make your body work hard, and you have to challenge yourself. If you don’t have the willpower yourself, you need someone to help you. You need some kind of motivation and some action in order to get strong. It’s the same in the spiritual realm. You can’t continue to go on with business as usual, even after all of the tremendous progress of

2004. You have to keep moving, keep overcoming lethargy, keep stretching your faith, keep accepting change and welcoming the new.

**273. My loves, you must welcome all that I have planned for you this coming year, because it's all part of the strengthening process.** You, as a Family, have just started to build better spiritual habits. You've made good progress, and I'm pleased with your successes in the spirit thus far. But you still have a ways to go, and that's what this year of strengthening is for. You are stronger, because you have been through the year of restructuring and renewal and all that it brought into your lives. But you're not as strong as you need to be. There is more progress to be made, more spiritual muscles you need to build, and more training for Me to pass on to you.

**274. For the year of 2004, you needed a special anointing of yieldedness to accept what I was bringing into each of your lives, especially during the renewal.** I poured this upon you, and you who have made it through the year of restructuring and have come out better for it are those who accepted the anointing of yieldedness and allowed Me to work in your life. Sometimes you didn't even know what I was doing, or why. You had to take so much by faith. But aren't you happy you did? Don't you feel better now—spiritually speaking—than you did 12 months ago? You may not feel like you're ready to run a marathon, but don't you feel like you're in a better position to be strengthened spiritually, to start toning and defining your spiritual muscles, to get more training and input?

**275. You've also sealed off a lot of the Enemy's inroads into your lives through various avenues.** So he will no longer be allowed into your Homes and lives to counteract the steps of good progress you make, as he has done in the past. That means that during the year of strengthening he won't be allowed to destroy the work I'm accomplishing, if you continue to remain on guard against his inroads. You won't be covering the same ground spiritually. You'll actually be getting stronger. You'll actually be getting toned spiritually. You'll actually be see-

ing the results of your obedience, sacrifices, and efforts to make spiritual progress.

**276. For the year of 2005 I am going to pour upon you a special anointing of endurance and vigilance.** The anointing of endurance will help you to “endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” knowing that the end results of whatever challenges you face are going to be to your benefit. Again, it's similar to getting strengthened in the physical; you must endure some pain in order to gain. You have to put forth the effort of training and lifting the weights, which isn't always fun, in order to get the results you're looking for.

**277. The anointing of vigilance will help you to continue to guard your spirits from the inroads of the Enemy**—so that you can cut him off at the pass and not allow him entrance into your lives and Homes. If he is allowed entrance, if he is allowed to distract and hinder, then the work of strengthening will be slower, and progress will be longer in coming. However, if you accept the anointing of vigilance of spirit, and remain on guard against the Enemy's attacks in all forms, then you will have an advantage in the spirit. Progress will be faster, victories will be more easily won, and the spiritual strengthening process will be sped along.

**278. To be a winner this year, you must make a conscious decision to embrace every change I decide to bring your way—whether to you personally, to your Home, or to the Family as a whole.** This is not a year of choosing at every turn whether or not you want to accept My will in your life, of choosing whether to flow with My plan and program or whether to be resistant, and certainly not of feeling you can do this without too many negative consequences as a result. If you want to keep up with the program, if you want to be spiritually strengthened, then there really aren't that many choices. You either choose My will or you don't. You either flow with My plan and program or you don't. And choosing the “don't” isn't really an option, at least not if you are hoping to be strengthened along with the rest of the Family!

**279. So why don't you just make everything easier for yourself, Me, and everyone around you, by making the decision now that you are going to put forth the effort of a believing, accepting, flowing spirit.** Choose to look at every change, every new endeavor, every revolution, as something to be excited about, to embrace, and to praise Me for.

**280. Fight desperately against cafeteria-style obedience slipping into the Family again,** by making a commitment to give every new change and revolution your whole heart, to fight for a believing, positive, full-of-faith spirit. I don't mean that you're never going to be tested—but when you're tested, remember these words I'm giving you here and now.

**281. 2005 is the year to say yes to Me!** It's not the year to say, "Maybe." Or, "Just a second, Lord!" Or, "Could You just give me a bit more time to get used to this idea?" Or, "Well, maybe I'll take some steps in the direction You're leading somewhere down the road." Say yes to Me. Jump in with both feet when I ask something of you—even if it's difficult. Take the offensive in the spirit by having a believing attitude, starting right now, today, as you read this GN. Believe you can be strengthened! Believe that everything I'm bringing into your life—and into the Family—is to enable you to grow and be strengthened. Believe you can do all things through Me, your strength.

**282. I'm not saying you're not going to have battles.** I'm not saying you're not going to be tempted to say no to My will. You will be tempted, you will be tried, and some choices will be difficult ones. But when you're faced with a choice, remember that the only choices that move you forward, that strengthen you, are the choices you make for Me, the choices you make to yield to My will, the choices you make to progress spiritually, the choices you make to be a doer of My Word. The choices you make to wait, or to yield partially, are the choices that will set you back a bit; such choices won't strengthen you. And too many of such choices will, in time, weaken you and render you unable to perform My plan for you.

**283. Remember that 2005 is the year of strengthening.** That means that strengthening your spirit, strengthening your Homes, and strengthening the whole work of the Family is the goal. And if that's the goal, then everything you do, every decision you make, should be something that's going to contribute to that goal. Decisions to hold back will limit Me and will weaken you, not strengthen you. Decisions to move forward, to obey when I call, to rise to new challenges will empower Me to work on your behalf and will strengthen you spiritually.

**284. As I said, I am giving you a special anointing for this year—the anointing of endurance and the anointing of vigilance—to** enable you to have the power you need to hold on, to fight, to become stronger warriors in the spirit. You can do all that I will ask of you, because you will have My anointing. If at any point you feel too weak, or unable, that's a sign that you aren't accessing My anointing to the full.

**285. I never ask you to do anything that I haven't provided the power and spiritual anointing for, knowing full well the challenges and the obstacles that await you.** To do so would be like sending a soldier into battle without a weapon, or asking a sailor to go to sea without a ship. I'm much smarter than that. I never ask anything of you, My brides, unless I know there is a 100% chance of success with My power aiding you. *(End of message.)*

**286. (Peter:) Mama and I love each of you very much!** We're so excited with the vision the Lord has put before us. This year of 2005 is going to be tremendous. We're thrilled to be a part of this marvelous Family, and to have the privilege of passing on His life-changing Words!

**287. Let's each take hold of this anointing of endurance and vigilance, and march triumphant into the marvelous future.** Praise our wonderful Lover!

You are in our prayers!

With love in the Keeper of the Keys,

Peter