

heart—your faults as well as your victories—and sit down & really explain how you feel. Then he responds.

ONE TIME, FOR EXAMPLE, HE WAS VERY DISOBEDIENT & WE DECIDED HE REALLY DID NEED A SPANKING (as he sometimes still does). He started pouring out all kinds of threat- enings of telling the police & that he would leave home etc., if we spanked him. (He is aware from school of the local laws that say you can't spank your children—so he knew where to aim at!)

ALTHO' HE REALLY NEEDED A SPANKING AT THE TIME, IT MADE US SEARCH OUR HEART. It all ended in peace, T.T.L., & we really got thru' to him after explaining, sharing for a long time & crying together, so the whole experience brought us closer to each other. He said later that he never really meant anything with all his threats—and he needed, oh, so much love! But it made us realize how important it is that we have real love & understanding for our children, & really grow to become their friends.

JONAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO KIND & WELL BEHAVED, but now suddenly he claims his independence—like a teenager already! Sometimes, tho', it seems it's more to test us & his own freedom & will, but in his heart he really loves us & wants to be good.

GOING TO SCHOOL ALSO BRINGS ON SO MANY NEW INFLUENCES & interests apart from the Lord, & sometimes he brings home with him a bad attitude that he picks up from his system friends. It often makes us desperate, since it's so important to guide the children the right way, while at the same time not have a self-righteous attitude & rebuking or condemning them for picking up certain things that we don't consider very "Christian".

WE ARE TRYING TO INCLUDE JONAS MORE IN THE ADULT MEETINGS & Mo Letter readings, since he already has his foundation & knows the Bible & Basic Letters. He loves going thru' the Bible prophecy classes directly from the Mo Ed classes at our Sunday Fellowship meetings.

"KIDZ" MAG REALLY TURNS HIS KEY & IS FILLING A NEED. The pre-teens need so much of this club & contest idea, like the photo contest & press card etc.

OFTEN THE WORD THEY KNOW POPS UP AT THE MOST UNEXPECTED TIMES! One funny example was when Rubin, age 8, had one of his school friends over for a visit. We suggested that maybe he could witness to him. Now perhaps we encouraged him a bit too much, because he took his little friend & sat down & started sharing from the Picture Bible he has & went thru' the whole doctrine, from Jesus' crucifixion all the way to the Endtime & about the Anti-Christ, & finally told his friend as he was backing out the door that he better not receive the Anti-Christ's number 666, but Jesus' number 777, or he'd really be in trouble!—GBH! He really went into it with his whole heart. Of course, maybe it was not so wise, but knowing Rubin, who is usually very quiet, it was an encouragement that he knew that much Bible!

WE WANTED TO ADD A WORD ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S SEX & LOVE LIFE TOO. We have not really interfered, except when they are teasing someone else about it, something they must have picked up from the system. Otherwise, they usually take care of it quite naturally. Eleonora-5 likes to masturbate & she doesn't seem to care where, to the point that we have felt the need to explain about not doing it to offend outsiders, in the livingroom etc.

Rubin & Jones both have their little lovers among other little sisters who visit sometimes. Emmanuel-3 loves mommy up & calls me "my little kitty-cat". So sweet! They all love to undress & sneak into their rooms with their little visiting brothers & sisters.

I TOLD THEM ONCE THAT IT ISN'T REALLY POSSIBLE TO MARRY FLESH BROTHERS or sisters, as they started talking about whether Eleonora should marry Jones or Rubin, but that the Lord would show them who in His time. I tried not to be judging or dogmatic, so I hope it wasn't interfering too much.

ONE THING WE'VE SEEN TOO IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FATHER'S ROLE. We've seen instances that if Daddy is not there or at least trying to do his part in carrying the load, the girls just faint under the burden. It always makes us so surprised & shocked when we hear of a Daddy running around doing his own thing & families dividing up when having several children, which still seems to happen even after all the admonitions from Dad about the importance of keeping families together, at least for the children's sake.

THRU' ALL THESE EXPERIENCES AS A GROWING FAMILY we can see that what makes us keep going is to set a sample of serving the Lord to our children for them to follow. We can not very well expect them to be any better than we are, & apart from the Letters it is really the children who spur us to want to keep on for the Lord. Hallelujah! Love, Adam & Patricia & family.

CHUCKLE: A friend was in the hospital giving birth to her first baby. As the labor pains became more frequent & severe she gasped to the nurse, "Is the hard part about over?" The nurse replied, "Honey, this is the easy part. The hard part will last for the next 18 years!" (Courtesy "Reader's Digest".)

A TEENAGER SPEAKS OUT!

Sex Should Be Fun!

Parents: Don't pressure your young teens into "sharing"!

From Shuly Bolivar, age 16;

Central America;

Dear Mo & Maria,

I FEEL BURDENED TO WRITE TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING. Since we're getting more & more teenagers I think it's very important for me to share these things with you, so that it can help others & help grown-ups understand this rather difficult age.

I WAS SAD & UPSET WHEN I READ IN MAG 38 what another teenage girl said about "going thru' it" in the area of sexual sharing. It really struck me, because more kids in the Family are becoming teenagers & it would be a shame if they had to "go thru' it" too.

HERE'S PART OF A LETTER I RECEIVED FROM A 13-YR. OLD GIRL, a friend of mine, in the Family: "Well, I went thru' it at first because it was kind of hard relating to older brothers about 30 years old when I had just turned 13. Also when I started maturing & starting to look 'beautiful' to the guys they would go around pinching & sleeping my butt, squeezing my tits etc., & for me this was a real turn-off."

"IT'S SORT OF DIFFERENT WHEN YOU 'SHARE' WITH SOMEONE YOUR OWN AGE, you're just having fun & it's easier to relate to each other & open up. But with someone twice your age you feel funny with them & you take it more seriously. Also sometimes when my parents shared or fell in love with someone, I felt like I was deserted & left alone with the kids, & this really turned me off sharing & sex. So they thought I wasn't quite as 'free' as they were, so they decided to break my hang-ups. My parents were

somewhat encouraging, but I didn't feel quite as free with them to go ask counsel, like you are with your Mom..."

I THINK THE BEST WAY I CAN HELP IS BY GIVING MY EXPERIENCES along the same line. When I was 13 in Venezuela I had an affair with your grandson (Junior). We liked each other very much. The thing I remember most was that we had fun—TONS of it.

IF WE'D HAD GROWN-UPS BREATHING DOWN OUR NECKS we probably wouldn't have even looked at each other. I think it's wonderful to have the liberty if you want it, & if it's spontaneous. With Junior & me, our rooms were next to each other, so naturally he would come & chat, & so it grew. He asked me, "Have you ever kissed?" I said, "No, I don't know how," & he said, "It's really easy, I'll teach you. Do you want to try?" So of course I did, because it was fun & something new.

WE USED TO SNEAK UP ON THE ROOF when no one was around & would bribe Philip with anything he wanted to let Junior sleep alone, as Jethro wasn't exactly liberal along those lines! We went to bed once, but it was something that grew over a 3-month period, something that was young, innocent & happy, with lots of love & fun & of course adventure.

ALTHO' I'M 16 I STILL DON'T FEEL MATURE ENOUGH TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH A GROWN MAN. Maybe it's hard for you to understand but sometimes a grown man can overpower a young girl & dominate her. Having a relationship with Junior cured me of a loathing of sex & a terror of older men due to the effect of an un-

wise older brother in our Home. I used to button my shirts to my throat, wear a bra & t-shirt & glare at anyone who called me pretty.

I THINK "CHILD BRIDES" IS A WONDERFUL LETTER because some (not all) teenagers really need to have fun with someone their own age group first. I haven't had anything serious with anyone after Junior, & I just know I'm not ready for it. Many guys think that just because a young girl had an "experience" that she's "available".

BUT YOUNG GIRLS ARE VERY IMPRESSIONABLE & brothers should be understanding & not expect it as their "right" as they might an older or more experienced sister. Maybe it sounds as if I'm protecting myself, but it has been bottle-breaking to tell you this!

IF A GIRL "GOES THRU' IT" AS FAR AS SEX (it's probably because she's being pressured into it, not wanting to appear to be a "girl who wouldn't"), but she just isn't ready for an experience with older brethren (for the particular ones in question). Altho' I've had an experience I would go thru' trials if I was pressured into sharing with an older guy.

I THINK A GIRL SHOULD BE IN LOVE OR VERY ATTRACTED before she starts making love, because a girl gets much more emotionally involved (like in "Male or Female"), & her first experiences get imprinted indelibly on her mind. The teenage girl is ready when she asks for it or enthusiastically accepts it. I think it's a shame to have to go thru' trials when sex should be something beautiful. I write because a sad experience could put some people off the wonderful love shared in the Family. May God bless & keep you, Dad. Your daughter in Jesus, Shuly. (PTL! GBY! Amen! We heartily agree!—& real love lasts!—M&M.)

Coping With Problem Teens!

If you feel like chucking them out, remember "Love Never Fails!"

Wise Counsel from Shuly Bolivar, age 16, & her loving Mom Rebecca; Central America: (The following advice & counsel is in response to a mother of a "problem teenager" in North America who had written to say that they had finally given up & sent her son to "visit" his system relatives, in effect "ex-communicating" him.)

From Shuly:

DEAR: MAYBE THE BEST WAY I CAN HELP IS BY TELLING YOU HOW I FELT AT THAT AGE. The ages of 13 & 14 are a period of extreme change from childhood to early adolescence & are very hard on both teenagers & parents. When you are 13 & 14 you are discovering many new things in life, & believe it or not the System things are very appealing.

YOU CANNOT TREAT AN EARLY ADOLESCENT IN THE FAMILY IN THE SAME WAY YOU TREAT A NEW DISCIPLE who is full-grown, for the simple reason that most of the time the adolescent doesn't even understand himself & needs even more love & patience from people around him.

AT 13 I TOLD MY MUM I WANTED THINGS, & that's the age I started to wear make-up, go to parties, see more movies, have boyfriends etc. My parents are very wise. Instead of condemning me for it, they let me try, & I soon began discovering for myself that it didn't fulfill.

MERELY THEIR TELLING ME WAS CERTAINLY NOT ENOUGH, sort of like when I was 2 years old & begged at least 50 times to touch the hot stove. Finally Mum let me, & after touching it once & screaming when I felt the sting, I never touched it again. When I was 11 & 12 I even wondered about the existence of God!



Shuly drinking in the new wine! Photo by Dave.

A PERSON NEEDS TO BE HELPED & LOVED DURING THIS STAGE. My parents with their love & example pulled me thru, & of course the Lord always works in people's lives even tho' others might not see this. If a little lamb goes thru a thorny rocky patch & seems down & "out of it", you never abandon or throw him out, but you mercifully & lovingly pull him thru.

IN OTHER WORDS—SHTICK! Of course it's a battle for parents. Ask mine! When we've gone thru' rough times in our life, does the Lord ever "chuck us out"? If so, I'd be in hell's lowest floor! It's God's job to lower the rod & judge. It's ours to forgive our brother "until 70 times 7" (Mt. 18:22).

ABOUT HIS "HALF-HEARTEDNESS", I'm not there & have no right to judge, but I'll give you an example that might be some help. My little sister is 12 years old. Many times she acts like a little Systemite! She has her ups

& downs. Right now she's "changing bodies" as it were & doesn't really know what to do or how to react, & many times she drives me up the wall! Her desires about God are right & she confesses what she believes but in her words: "But Mummy, I just forget."—Showing thus a typical teenager.

MANY TIMES I WOULD LIKE TO CONDEMN HER & wring her neck (to be honest) but instead my parents tell me to pray for her & take the lower seat & praise & encourage her for what she does do. The result: Sometimes from her own heart (not because anyone told her to) she does really sweet things, like she took her guitar to school & taught her whole class a Family song to sing at the school assembly.

DON'T FORGET—LOVE NEVER FAILS! A person who's supposed to be "walking on the water", living a Christian life, which is a "die daily" life, suddenly falls & remains treading water for quite a while—do you step on his head & drown him by doing exactly what the Devil wants—surrendering him as a hopeless case? Or do you help him thru'?

IF MY PARENTS HAD EXCOMMUNICATED ME & sent me to live with my Systemite Grandma when I was going thru' my bad patch, it would have been traumatic & I would have lived with a bitter resentment against them. The best way to rid him of these "other gods" is by letting him have a try, but always having the Family & God's love to come back to when he's hurt himself.

THE LOVING SHOULDER TO "CRY ON" MUST NEVER EVER GO AWAY! As for a "broken heart", God will take care of that. Believe me, He does! Depending how much broken heartedness you show in your dealings with him & others, that's what he'll

learn to be.

AS FOR HIS EFFECT ON THE YOUNGER CHILDREN, many times the reason for their misbehavior is the parents, or simply they're in "the terrible twos" or something similar. The teenage brother or sister can have a certain effect with the example, but the person responsible is the parent.

AT 13 & 14 I WAS AWFUL, & altho' I always wanted to serve the Lord, believe me, it certainly didn't seem like it to others! Everyone has "hidden problems", no one's perfect. But a teenager has more because of the physical & mental growing up which can be quite disturbing & even painful. Adolescence involves suffering (I can tell you) & everything should be done to make it easier with love, like my parents did for me, rather than condemning.

IF YOU HAD JUDGED ME BY MY "FIRE" AT 13-14, in comparison to me the churches would have been Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. I was almost scared to witness in case my friends started sneering at me for being a religious freak. But little by little when I discovered their superficiality, I realized that what I had was better & started to fight against evolution etc.

THE DESIRE WAS ALWAYS IN ME to serve the Lord, even tho' the Devil bugged & the flesh got in the way & my parents got worried, but God always takes care of His sheep (even if they are black!)

A PREGNANT WOMAN WHO HAS A CHILD WHO IS A VIR-TUAL PARASITE draining her has to eat healthier foods to feed the child. Are you surprised that your son drains you spiritually? That's why as parents (ask mine) you have to be even more loving, patient & in the Spirit than ever.

YOU'RE RIGHT THAT GOD'S WORD WILL NEVER RETURN VOID—if you give your love expecting nothing in return, unselfishly. I really hope I can be of



12-year-old Debbie, Shuly's younger sister, Love, praise & encouragement bring out the best in teens! Photo by Dave.

some help. I'm praying for you. Keep on fighting! Do you remember that Mo Letter where Mo says that if you have "real love" you won't fail them? May God bless & keep you. Lots of love, Shuly. P.S. Take him to S.A. Give him a challenge. It might be just what he needs—Adventure & challenge. Don't leave him in his Egypt!

From Shuly's Mom, Rebecca:

DEAR: FIRST OF ALL I SYMPATHIZE WITH YOU having an awkward teenager! I know what it's like, & I think boys must be more difficult than girls—especially for us mothers who never were boys! Shuly has shared a lot in her letter to you, so there is no need to repeat it. There were just a couple of things I wanted to add.

THE FIRST THING IS ABOUT JOBS. I have a terrible time to get my 12-year-old Debbie to do a job, let alone finish it! Of

course if there is a reward she may do it more readily, but even then it's a struggle. However, she does do it eventually because I go on at her until it's finished—exhausted, yes—but battle won! Kids do change—eventually (TG!)

THE OTHER THING IS ABOUT FORGIVING THEM.

You said you forgave him at least 6 times in the past two years: We feel as if we are forgiving our two teenagers about 6 times every month! I wonder if he knows what you are talking about when you mention brokenness. You really can't understand brokenness until you've been broken, by the Lord Himself.

ONE THING THEY'LL NEVER FORGET IS THE LOVE WE SHOW THEM. They'll also never forget our impatience, lack of love & lack of comprehension either. You see, all you'll be gaining by sending your son to the System without hope of return is to earn him hate & bitter-