

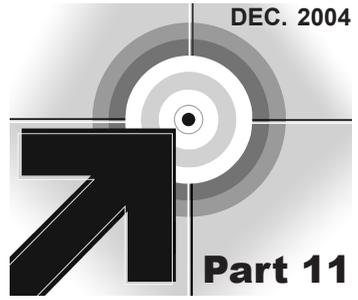
Shooting Straight

God's views on current issues and attitudes in the Family

By Maria

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Computer Games



Part 11

The issue:

COMPUTER games are a nonissue for some, but for others they're an important source of recreation and entertainment. Unlike some of the other topics in these "Shooting Straight" GNs that have been addressed, sometimes numerous times, in previous GNs, such as movies, the Internet, and novels, we have not talked too much about computer games.

2. Before we go into the Lord's counsel, I want to explain that I have never played a computer game, just as I have not read a novel in probably 20 years. I don't go on the Internet at all, and I have probably watched ten or less movies in the last 10 or 15 years. Obviously, these forms of System entertainment are not a big part of my life—not because I'm not interested in some of them, but mainly because of my eyes. It's not that I don't like to read good novels or watch worthwhile movies. In fact, I very much enjoy such entertainment when I am able to very occasionally partake of it. I was an avid reader when I was young, and I'm pretty certain I'd read books from time to time and enjoy a few more movies if my eyes could take it. Who knows, maybe I'd even check out some of the more modern forms of entertainment that some of you enjoy, like browsing the Internet or trying my hand at a computer game, ha!

3. So I don't want to appear self-righteous or make it sound like I would never do these things that I know many of you enjoy for relaxation and entertainment, because some of them I do like and would enjoy and partake of if my eyes were stronger. But the fact is that I have to preserve my eyes for the Lord's work, for the needs of the Family, and I can't afford to use them for relaxation and recreation very often. It's a choice I've had to make. Although it has been a bit sad for me to forsake some of these things that I like and enjoy, because of my eyes, at the same time I have been thankful to our Husband for this "blessing in disguise," because it has allowed me more time to devote to serving you and getting the Lord's Words out to you, my precious Family.

4. However, just because I don't engage in a whole lot of worldly entertainment, due to the reasons mentioned

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above, that doesn't mean I'm going to be harsh and strict and expect everyone to be like me. That would be unrealistic and unfair, and definitely not what our Husband intends. I realize that you, dear Family, have entertainment and recreational needs, and since you're able to enjoy them at this time in your life—in moderation, within the boundaries of the Lord's will, and with His blessing—then I completely understand. I understand your interests and your likes and dislikes, because I like many of these things too, even if I can't enjoy them like you can.

5. Peter enjoys movies too, and he's able to watch more than I can, because he doesn't have weak eyes like me. He also reads occasional novels, usually historical ones, such as when he's on airplanes or taking some time off. So I understand that everyone needs a break. You need to be able to take your mind off your work, and you want to do or learn or experience something different from time to time.

6. Regarding those who enjoy computer games, I understand that it's a world that many of us, especially FGAs, have not had much contact with. It's hard for us to understand computer games—either how they're played, or what they're like, or why people like them. Peter has never played computer games, and as I mentioned earlier, neither have I.

7. Because gaming is a pastime that is pretty unique to the younger generation, I want to caution you FGAs to resist being hardline and self-righteous about it. There will be that tendency because you don't understand it, you haven't tried it, and therefore you could easily be tempted to deduce that “computer games are a waste of time” or “computer games are too violent” or “computer games are addictive,” etc. Well, all of that is true in some cases, but can also be true of all the other forms of worldly entertainment we've covered thus far.

8. Gaming is a new thing, and therefore we who are not initiated are more easily alarmed. We have not become accustomed to gaming, it can easily look “evil,” and it's the nature of man at times to be afraid of what we don't understand. That's not to say there isn't a lot to “be afraid of” in computer games, but I'm explaining why we as FGAs can have pretty strong negative reactions to gaming.

9. The following messages and insight from the Lord will give a fair bit of insight into computer games. This is not to promote this type of worldly entertainment, but to help those of us who are completely ignorant of computer games to understand a bit what is “out there” in that realm.

10. I want you to understand that when praying about and preparing this GN for you, I counseled with those in WS who are familiar with computer games or who played computer games pre-renewal. Our

units in WS have a computer game committee, and over the years have invested much prayer, discussion, and hearing from the Lord regarding computer games. I have sought the opinions and insight of those with experience, and I have had various channels pray about gaming—some of those channels were pre-renewal avid gamers, and some had never played or even seen a computer game. The counsel the Lord gave was read by numerous people, and we continued to take it back to the Lord, as needed, until we felt we had found the Lord's clear mind on the matter.

11. We didn't have to do this because computer games are so important, nor because they are so widespread in the Family. But because they are rather foreign to most people and they are nearly impossible to “preview,” they have been a source of conflict between teens and parents, and there is such a vast variety of games to choose from.

12. Before we go into the counsel the Lord gave, I have to explain that WS will not be able to rate computer games. We just don't have time to do that, and it would be an extremely time-consuming venture. The Lord is leaving the choices up to you, according to this counsel. He's expecting that you will seek Him about your computer game habits, just as you are seeking Him about every other form of System input and entertainment. He is counting on you to put your discipleship, your spiritual life, your service for Him, and your relationship with Him and others before computer games and the time you invest in playing them.

13. There are many spiritual principles and guidelines in the messages already published regarding the Internet, movies, TV, sports, novels, and music, that you should of course apply to your decisions regarding computer games. We can't keep repeating every point with every new topic. You need to be wise

Note: The “Challenging Thots” in this Letter address commitment and discipleship in general and aren't always related to the issue being discussed.

enough to see that much of what the Lord has said about these other forms of System input applies to computer games too. In this GN we will only cover the computer game-specific guidelines. So if this seems incomplete, remember that the principles you have already learned and that were articulated for other topics apply just as much to computer games.

God's mind on the matter:

14. (Jesus:) Computer games must be kept in check, just as much as the other forms of worldly input that I have addressed. The most important message that I'm giving you after the renewal also applies to computer games. That is: I expect you to be dropped out, to be in the world but not of it. I expect that you will not return to your pre-renewal habits and mindsets. You should be different now, and you should continue to be different, with a greater commitment to Me, a deeper desire for the things of the Spirit, more connection to your fellow Family members, and living a life that is obviously much more that of a disciple.

15. Computer games are not disallowed, but they must be played according to My guidelines and with My permission. As with the other forms of entertainment and avenues whereby the System can enter your Home and affect your spirits, you are responsible to seek Me and to be yielded to My leading. You will need to stay within the guidelines I establish here, but they are not black and white, just as the other guidelines I have put forth are not black and white.

16. I won't make sweeping, crystal-clear rules and set absolute time limits, because that's not the way I'm working today. I could box you all in with rules and forbid you to do anything that could possibly be harmful to your spirits or that could entice you to the ways and attitudes of the world. But in order to do that, I'd virtually have to say no to everything from the System—all entertainment and all non-Word-based activities. That is not healthy, nor

is it beneficial, because now is the time when I wish for a freewill offering of obedience, not just regarding gaming, but also regarding the other forms of entertainment that you enjoy.

17. Not everyone enjoys the same types of relaxation or entertainment. Some have a real bent for movies. Others particularly enjoy reading or listening to a good novel. Others prefer to play cards. And others prefer “action” recreation like working with their hands, or sports, or working out. Everyone is different, but the goal you're all to strive for is to maintain your relationship with Me, protect and nurture your spiritual life, and be the sample of discipleship that you are called to be.

18. For those of you who have had pre-renewal problems with addictions to gaming, or who have a penchant for the wrong kinds of games, you should seriously pray about and consider not taking up gaming again after the renewal is over. You should play it safe out of respect for the Word, the Family, your sample, and your place as a disciple, by driving as “far away from the cliff” as possible, and that means to forsake it.

19. My counsel in this message is absolutely not to be seen as an excuse to now just pick up where you left off at the time the renewal started—not with computer games or with any other kind of worldly input. The point is to hang on to your renewal victories—and by renewal victories I mean such things as having more time with the children, JETTs, and teens, having more time for fellowship, more time spent in the Word and strengthening your relationship with Me, and breaking old habits of addiction.

20. Regarding computer games specifically, there are several main dangers.

1) The amount of time spent playing computer games. Games can be serious time-wasters. A movie might take only two hours, but it's possible for some computer games to go on for many hours and even translate into days and weeks as the games progress from one level to the next,

and the possibility of acquiring an addiction to computer games is much greater than with some other forms of System entertainment.

2) Spending too much time playing computer games often leads to an addiction or obsession with gaming. This can result in a lack of balance in your daily life, to where your life becomes about gaming, about the next “shot” of your addiction, to where you live every moment just waiting for the next time you can play.

3) Excessive computer game playing can dull your senses to the spirit world, which is something that, while today it may not seem serious, will be serious in the days to come. An obsession for anything of this world causes you to overlook or ignore the checks of the spirit, the spirit world, and all that is in it. The chains of Bacchus, lord of addiction, ensnare you when you allow him to make anything of this world more important to you than the things of the spirit. When he has you in his grip, you can't see the things of the spirit world; he intentionally lays his tentacles over your eyes, blinding you to the spirit world and weighing you down with carnal-mindedness.

21. There are various types of computer games, and many different attributes within computer games. Some computer games are okay, while others are to be shunned completely. Attributes that put many computer games within the “completely avoid” category are the following:

- Graphic details such as blood, gore, and guts.
- Excessive, senseless violence and killing, where brutality and destruction are the primary or only goal.
- Role-playing evil or dabbling in evil.
- Criminal, illegal, unchristian, and ungodly activities; doing wrong.
- Profanity and foul language.
- Anything perverse, evil, hateful, vengeful, sadistic, or cruel.
- Anything occult or demonic.

- Witchcraft and evil spells. (Some games have spiritual aspects to them, and the powers the person playing the game has are good powers like “healing,” “salvation,” “leadership,” “endurance,” and “regeneration,” etc. So it's not that all computer games that are set in fantasy worlds, or that employ magic or special spiritual powers, are bad. However, if the powers are evil, or ungodly, or border on witchcraft, then I caution My children to stay far away from them.)

22. The other types of games are allowed to be played in moderation, depending on the game, the age of the player, the maturity and spiritual condition of the player, the tendency toward addiction that the player has, the amount of time the player spends playing, etc. But even these types of games, which can be good, or at least not harmful, can cause negative results in some players. So if you're wondering if a specific type of computer game that's not in the “completely avoid” category might be better for you personally to avoid, because it's not good for you spiritually, here are some things to consider and ask Me about:

- Does the game cause you to become overly competitive?
- Does the game get you in the wrong spirit? Does it cause you to be unloving, frustrated, angry, or uptight?
- Does the game puff you up or feed your pride or bravado by making you feel “smart,” “capable,” or ultimately better or stronger than others?
- Does the game make you worldly or cause you to lust after the things of this world?
- Do you have ungodly attitudes regarding the military or a penchant or fascination for war? If so, is a game with these elements in it good for you spiritually?
- Does the game make you want to live a System life, rather than the life of a missionary and disciple?

- Does the game suck up hours of precious time in one sitting, and make you desperate to come back for more?
- Does the game make you selfish, reclusive, independent, and into your own little world?

23. (Question:) You can have many of these problems—such as anger, frustration, competitiveness, pride, worldliness, etc., without ever having played a computer game. So do computer games actually bring out these problems? When someone has a spiritual problem, it's not always the result of a computer game, is it?

24. (Jesus:) If you notice something in your life that's wrong, that's out of line, then it's a good idea to look at the avenues of worldly entertainment you partake of and see if the kind of movies you watch, or the kind of computer games you play, or the kind of books you read or music you listen to, might be contributing to your NWO, or a problem you're having, or a battle you're fighting.

25. Sometimes computer games can actually bring about negative things in your life—like anger, frustration, competitiveness, worldliness, or other such ungodly attributes. But worldly entertainment isn't always the cause of such things. Some people can have these problems even if they don't play computer games. So I'm not trying to say that computer games should always be blamed for these types of problems. What I am saying is that if you have these problems in your life, and especially if you notice them cropping up more when

you play computer games, you should pray about whether or not there is any connection—or if it's connected to any of the other forms of worldly entertainment you partake of.

26. Another thing to consider is that if you already battle with some of these things, and if they're some of your besetting sins, even without any worldly entertainment in your life, then adding something like computer games into the equation of your life might make things worse, and might make these weaknesses harder for you to fight.

27. Also, it's never a good idea to run to a form of worldly input to drown out your problems or battles, just as it's never good to do so with alcohol. If you're fighting frustration, anger, or even something like loneliness or discouragement, don't run to a computer game or movie or book for solace, even though I'm sure you'll sometimes be very tempted to do so. Don't allow computer games—or any other forms of worldly entertainment—to become a crutch that you lean on in times of trial or difficulty. Don't let them replace Me and the help and comfort and instruction I wish to give you. Worldly entertainment might help you to forget about your anger, problems, or battles for the moment, but they will never give you the permanent help and solutions and comfort that only I can give. *(End of message.)*

28. Computer games, like movies, need to be considered, or allowed, or not allowed, depending on the age of the gamer. While one movie might be okay for an adult, the same movie would be completely unacceptable for

a JETT or young teen, and it's the same with computer games.

29. I will not give specific titles of games that can or cannot be played, as that's not efficient or effective, since there are new games on the market every day. But the main rules I put forth are that games that include graphic, senseless violence are to be avoided completely, as I mentioned above. No one should be found playing such computer games. And by "games that include graphic, senseless violence," I mean if the whole point of the game is centered around violence, and especially if there is gore, blood, and other such graphic and disgusting details. There is way too much that is negative and ungodly within these types of games for anyone in My Family to be allowed to play them.

30. However, certain games that include non-graphic violence—and by this I mean that violence is not the sole purpose of the game and there are no graphic or unpleasant details within the game—are to be played by those 21 and over, only. These types of non-graphic games that are only for those 21 and over, may include some (though definitely not all) of the following:

31. • Role-playing games, often in a fantasy realm, where you are often controlling a group of small adventurers and warriors, exploring and fighting as you go. These games often include creating, improving, and upgrading a character.

32. • Action and military-based games, where the player may actually wield or fire a weapon; and while the end objective of the game is not killing, some of the game play may involve wielding or firing a weapon.

33. These are the most controversial computer games, because they're not "evil" but they can be questionable, and they can affect one person very differently than they affect another. Therefore, in order to make the decisions regarding these types of games easier, and to avoid this being a point of conflict and possible disunity, and especially to protect the

hearts, minds, and spirits of young gamers, I put this age guideline in place.

34. The reason for this is that obviously any kind of exposure to violence in computer games will be dangerous for children. JETTs and teens are still in a very turbulent time in their lives. They're building their character, making decisions, and are generally going through a time that's confusing and difficult. They have many challenges before them just with growing up. They don't have the stability or the sense of reality to be able to discern what is fantasy and what is real, and therefore to subject them to more conflict and complication that would enhance the spiritual battles that they already engage in is unnecessary or unwise.

35. YAs are also not to play games with violence (even if it is non-graphic), as they are still sorting out too many things in their lives of service. They have just recently signed the discipleship contract, and there are many new responsibilities they are accepting at this time. Many are becoming more involved in love relationships or getting married, many are just learning to be full-time missionaries, and many are still sorting out youthful attractions to the System or the military. For all these reasons, it's generally not spiritually healthy or expedient that YAs subject their minds and spirits to games that include violence, even non-graphic violence.

36. When all is said and done, you as a disciple will be responsible to seek Me and to be desperate to make the right decisions. You must value your discipleship, your spiritual strength, and your connection with your brothers and sisters in spirit more than you value your computer games. If you find that your gaming is getting out of hand, if it's bearing bad fruit, if it's taking too much time, if it's affecting your attitudes, language, or relations with others, then I would expect that you would willingly stop playing. The choice is yours. (*End of message.*)

37. (Mama:) We went back to the Lord several times to ask for His clarification or confirmation on the age designation of over 21. Here is one of the messages He gave, which I want to include so that you'll understand why this rule is in place.

38. (Jesus:) Some of you probably wonder why 18- to 21-year-olds can't be under the same guidelines as those over 21. I want to explain. Besides the reasons I just listed, there are a couple of others:

1) These non-graphically violent games are not My preference. There are some that I will give occasional permission for someone to play, as I have explained, but those who are seeking Me and open to My counsel and wanting to live the life of a disciple will find that I don't give them permission all that often, and the guidelines are pretty strict. By making these types of games available only for those 21 and over, it greatly limits the number of people who will even be interested in playing such games. Most over-21's are busy and lead full lives, so the times they even ask Me for permission and desire to play will be much less than if I opened the door to anyone over 18, who, as a general age group, have a lot more time and a lot more of an inclination toward those games. This is one major reason.

2) Another reason is that, although you 18- to 21-year-olds are full adults, you are also still forming your habits and likes and dislikes, and I want to protect you from developing bad habits or desires or addictions that you'll have to fight against later.

3) Another reason is that, as I stated when I lifted the alcohol restrictions for over-21's only, those younger are just learning how to handle things responsibly. The world knows that too, and that's why in some places smoking and/or drinking aren't allowed until a person is over 21. Computer games with non-graphic violence are somewhat in the same category as far as I'm concerned—something that I don't

want to allow until you're old enough to see it more as I see it, and able to keep your appetite within healthy limits.

39. I know this will be a hard saying. I realize that. But as your faithful Shepherd, it is My duty to lay down guidelines which, if you abide by them, will not allow you to come to harm. If I did not do so, I would be a delinquent shepherd, an hireling. So even though it's difficult, know that I do it out of great love for you, and understanding of your needs. I want to meet those needs in a much better way than allowing you to grow addicted to or be unduly influenced by certain types of computer games. *(End of message.)*

40. (Jesus:) I know there are shepherds, parents and even gamers who have been hoping for more specific guidelines and even game ratings. After reading these messages, some of you may feel like too much is in your court.

41. However, I have a specific reason for presenting My instruction with less details than some of you are hoping for, and that is because one of the most important things for gamers to learn is self-control and a willingness to ask Me, and receive My answers, about the content of the games they want to play. I could make very strict rules that would pretty much ban most kinds of games, but doing so would not teach gamers what they need to learn.

42. In addition, I want you, parents and shepherds, to be a bit more involved in what your young people play, and to take more of an active shepherding role in this area. If the rules I laid down were too specific, many of you parents and shepherds would feel you could simply read the

rules, outlaw a bunch of games, and then leave it at that. But because the guidelines regarding games are a bit general, or at least some aspects are, you shepherds and parents will, and should, feel more obligated to take part in or at least properly organize the process for deciding on Home computer game guidelines.

43. So I repeat: these are simple, general guidelines, and the reason they are not any more specific is because I want you, My children, to seriously pray about this form of worldly input and make very specific decisions based on what I tell you as a Home, and also you as an individual gamer, regarding what is and isn't acceptable for you spiritually. (*End of message.*)

44. (Jesus:) As with all other forms of System input and worldly entertainment, I am leaving the choice with you, My post-renewal Family of the future, to decide how much you will take in and allow computer games entrance into your lives. Throughout these "Shooting Straight" GNs featuring My counsel and instruction concerning System input, I've acknowledged your need for relaxation, downtime, and entertainment. I've said that some of your entertainment can come from System sources, providing you are prayerful, careful, and Spirit-led.

45. I am not saying "no" to computer games across the board. Once again, however, I direct you to focus on your discipleship, to focus on the reasons why you're in the Family, why you're dropped out from the System, why you're living your life serving Me and others. Your discipleship and the importance of preserving your spirit and your commitments should be your primary concern in judging this avenue of gaming in your life.

46. All System input has an effect on you, and while there are measures of good effects and influences that can be found within the realm of System input and worldly entertainment, such "good" effects are few and far between. A wise disciple will not focus on the "advantages" of a particular avenue of worldly entertainment without also bringing into the equation the disadvantages or reasons it might not be best for him spiritually. A disciple who is concerned about his spirit will not try to hang labels on certain forms of entertainment and say, "This must be good, because I derive such-and-such good benefit from it." While there are benefits to certain types of worldly entertainment, the truly wise disciple will read My Words, accept and believe them, and take the tack of clearly recognizing System input and worldly entertainment for what it is.

47. My mind on the matter is as follows: Worldly entertainment or input can be fun, away from thinking, relaxing, a rush or thrill, entertaining, stimulating, etc. But it is also a potential avenue for the Enemy to weaken your spirit, cause compromise, dull your senses, steal your time, and cause you to become lethargic in spirit. While I give you leave to seek Me, pray about, and decide together as a Home what your Home's guidelines concerning computer games will be, according to the overall counsel that I've given concerning System input and worldly entertainment, you must also guard against the ways the Enemy might try to pull you down spiritually. You must counteract his attacks, and actively protect your spiritual life.

48. I'm asking more of My disciples today than I have in the past. I'm asking you, My post-renewal Family, to pull up your socks, to commit more fully, to give more of your time to Me, to reaching the lost, and to loving your brothers and sisters. I'm asking you, My children, to give up much of the fluff and frills of the world so that you can become and remain strong and dedicated, so that you will have the strength and faith to believe the strong and radical Words that I will give you in the future, so that you remain set apart and dropped

out from the worldlings, and so that you can be bright and shining beacons to the world—living testimonies of My power and Spirit.

49. If you are a computer gamer and this is your favorite form of entertainment, relaxation, and recreation, believe Me when I say that I do understand. I understand all of My children and their particular likes, desires, and fascinations. Just because computer games weren't around when I walked on the Earth doesn't mean I don't feel your very feelings. It doesn't mean that I can't relate. I know each of you intimately, and I feel your joys and your sorrows. I know what a great sacrifice it would be if I were to ask you to give up gaming permanently. I know what that would cost you.

50. I also know your love for Me. I know your hearts' desires. I know that above even the things that bring you physical and momentary happiness, thrills, and excitement of the flesh, you sincerely crave the excitement of the spirit. I know that some of you do not feel the "excitement of the spirit" that you read about, and so you often equate your gaming times with the spiritual warfare, the rush of winning battles, overcoming, and other things that parallel the realm of the spirit and some of the spiritual weapons that I've revealed to My children, because it helps you to relate and it brings things down to a level you can understand.

51. Whatever you are doing, whether at work or play, if you bring Me into your midst and try to bring the things of the spirit into your activity, that pleases Me. It pleases Me that some of you try to adapt your times of gaming to producing positive fruit, so to speak, in translating aspects of the physical game or strategy into thoughts of the spiritual warfare, or through meditating or discussing with others how a certain game mirrors aspects of the spirit world, the supernatural powers that I have given the good and evil forces within Heaven and Hell, or other parallels. That's good, and whenever you can bring Me into an activity, or draw out a lesson or benefit to yourself after engaging in worldly entertainment, it's worthwhile and wise

to do so. But you have to understand that that doesn't negate the negative effect of the System input or worldly entertainment itself.

52. The fact of the matter is that the amount of time you expend in partaking of the world's entertainment will have an effect on you. One of the biggest pitfalls to computer games is the time it takes from you. It's not transferred to time well spent. It often discourages, rather than encourages, fellowship. It's not spiritually based or edifying in the sense of lifting you up, strengthening your discipleship, or enhancing your life for Me. It is recreation, relaxation, entertainment, and fun—sometimes involving others, sometimes on your own. There is a time and place for that, but each of you who play computer games will have to come to Me and seek Me desperately to find the right balance in your life. As with all other forms of worldly input, you'll also need to receive the input and agreement of your Home, so that your Home as a whole can receive My blessing through your collective obedience.

53. As with all forms of worldly entertainment and input, I'm asking you to cut back on computer games. I'm asking you to be willing to give up and to forsake much of the time you previously spent playing computer games, and to give that time to Me, to your family and friends, and to your spiritual strengthening. I'm asking you to sacrifice. That's My overall message to all FD members who want to be wholehearted, sold-out, moving forward disciples.

54. It's just not possible to be radical, dropped out, alive-and-kicking disciples while you're still tethered to so much System input. You can have some, yes, and I've given many guidelines throughout these messages, and if you're desperate to stay on the cutting edge with Me, you'll easily find many effective safeguards by which you can accurately gauge whether you're being obedient to what I'm asking of you, and if you're keeping limited System entertainment in the right perspective and balance or not.

55. The simple message is that I want more of your time. I want you to give more of your time to others. I want all My children to cut back on all the avenues through which the Enemy has had so much access to your minds and hearts. I want to have 100% of your time so that I can strengthen you and infuse you with new life and spirit. I want to be the One Who says, “Okay, go ahead and enjoy some time gaming because you’ve been faithful with your Word time, you’ve heard from Me faithfully, you’ve been pouring out and giving of your time to others, and now I approve a bit of time where you can relax and enjoy yourself in this activity.” I want to be the One Who is the judge, not you.

56. If you are a disciple, then even if it’s very difficult for you, you’ll be willing to give up gaming just out of obedience to Me. That’s not what I’m asking of you, but I’m trying to make a point here. My point is that I’m asking you to give up a great deal of it. I’m asking you to put tighter, more spiritually-safe restrictions on your gaming. I’m asking you to be open to others giving you counsel, and being willing to forgo gaming for periods of time when I show you that it’s just not needed.

57. I’m asking you to be willing to give Me a freewill offering of this avenue of entertainment that you love so much, that you crave for excitement or relaxation, that you might not even feel harms, hinders, or distracts you from My work. I’m asking if you’re willing to let go of the tethers that have kept you in the past so closely bound to the computer and gaming. I’m asking you to be willing to see gaming in a new light, in the light of My plan for your life, in the light of My call to you as My dropped-out disciple, in the light of the many needy individuals around you, in the light of being a keys-turned-to-swords wielder within My fantasy true-life realm of the future.

58. I have tremendous adventures in store for those of you who crave the excitement, the mystery, the intrigue, and the difficult challenges within gaming. There are real monsters,

demons, dragons and vampires that you can slay in the netherworld. There are great conquests to achieve, and strategies so complex that your mind will be reeling. The concept of defeating your foes, of killing “the bad guy” and being victorious is not wrong; that is very much the way of the spirit, as you know. However, that is the “next level,” so to speak. And you’re not going to get there until you leave this life and enter Heaven. Then you’ll have access to tangible weapons of the spirit and you’ll be assigned your missions, if you have an interest in such things.

59. You might wonder why I’m not giving you the go-ahead to “practice away” if certain types of computer games seem to be so in line with the warfare of the spiritual realm. Well, the answer is pretty simple: It’s not the time now. The job you have right now is a more tedious one, yet it’s an extremely important one. What I’m asking you to do today in your life for Me is what will enable you to be a skilled warrior in the spiritual warfare of the future. I’ve commissioned you to love your brothers and sisters, live communally, give to others, win the lost, soak in the Word, learn to wield the spiritual weapons through your faith, your words, your putting feet to action in belief. I’m asking you to make it through this testing level before you enter the real world of spiritual combat. I’m asking you to become proficient with your new weapons on Earth now, so that you can make full use of them in the future and then upgrade to even more powerful ones in the spirit.

60. I know some of you are eager to upgrade, to move into more “exciting” stuff, but I know what you need, and this time on Earth is proving your mettle, testing your worth, and through the tests I am giving you today, I’m seeing who I’ll issue the invitation to be part of My elite fighting forces—those who will charge into the depths of Hell to raid the very stronghold of Satan!

61. Yes, you heard that right. There is going to be spiritual action, wars, and battles

in the spirit world the likes of which you have never heard of. As the world races even now to its demise, so is the spirit world racing toward its ultimate confrontations. The battles within the spirit world at present are regular and intense, as I have described to you, but the greatest and most unbelievable are yet to come. And the ultimate experiences I am reserving for you, My children, once you are here by My side.

62. So if the challenge, thrill, or excitement of computer games is a very real allure in your life, don't worry, I understand. And I'm going to more than recompense your sacrifices 100-fold. You won't know what's hit you when you come and join the "real deal." But for now, if you can study what I've commissioned you to do here and now, what your job is, you'll see that if you spend a lot of time gaming, you're not going to be equipped and qualified to fulfill your job either now or later. So for that reason, I'm asking you to cut back, to keep your gaming time to the minimum, to even forsake it altogether if that's what I ask of you.

63. I'm not ruling out computer games 100% for entertainment and relaxation purposes, but you should definitely check in with Me first before you just dive into a computer game that could suck a couple of hours of your life down the monitor. I'm not against you having fun and some entertainment, providing you've been obeying My instructions and pleas to you to keep in touch with Me and to be faithful with the spiritual requirements I demand of you as disciples. I cannot and will not bless you if you put computer games above My Word, hearing from Me, fellowshiping with others, or doing something else that you know I'm asking of you.

64. I'll give you some tips, guidelines, and safeguards here, which you can refer to and seek Me about in greater detail.

65. • Ask Me how I see computer games in your life. Do I want you to give them up altogether, or am I allowing them for you as a limited avenue of entertainment?

66. • Ask Me how much time, specifically, either per week or per month, you can engage in computer games without it either setting you back or keeping you from moving forward spiritually. (This amount of time should not be more time than your Home sets overall for worldly input or System entertainment per week/month, and would have to be cut back if you're taking in any other System entertainment.)

67. • (*If you're not a gamer:*) Ask Me if your attitude about those who game is in line with Mine. Ask Me if you've allowed the Enemy to tempt you with self-righteousness or criticalness concerning those who enjoy this form of entertainment, or who may be having a hard time cutting back. Ask Me to remind you about the sacrifices I'm asking you to make so that you don't project an air of self-righteousness or a condemning attitude to others.

68. • Check any and all games you play with Me before engaging in them. Get My specific approval on each game, and not in a rushed, "Jesus, can I please play this game? Is it okay, please?" type of spirit. Sincerely ask Me about each game, and be willing and open to receive My "no's."

69. • Ask someone to be your gaming "buddy." This person doesn't have to be a gamer; it should be someone who you know is determined to follow and obey the Word and to be a faithful disciple. Keep them informed of your gaming habits, the counsel you've gotten from Me, and the amount of time you're spending gaming. Confess to them (and to your Home shepherds) if you go over the limit I've set on your gaming.

70. • Never play a computer game if you haven't had faithful Word time each day that week. If you haven't heard from Me about your personal life for a few days, then you should be sure to pay your dues to Me first.

71. • If you haven't contributed to your Home and communal lifestyle by fellowshiping with those in your Home and joining in on activities, etc., within the past week, then you should seek out others to fellowship with instead of gaming.

72. • If you find yourself regularly talking about your gaming time, reminiscing over your great strategies, or mulling over your next moves or advances, then you need to pull back from gaming in order to realign your priorities.

73. • If you find yourself feeling uninspired or bummed by the prospect of having to partake in fellowship-type activities because you'd rather be gaming, this shows that you don't have a "just balance," and you should set aside gaming for a time until you regain appreciation for fellowship and interaction with your Family.

74. • Adults, never play a game that is unsuitable for children in their presence.

75. If you honestly want to please Me and hit the mark as a disciple, these safeguards will provide you with enough ground to know exactly where you stand. I acknowledge that it's very difficult to give up or cut back on something that is fun, exciting, and that you look forward to. But believe Me when I say that the rewards and blessings that I'm stacking up for you are worth far more than any amount of gaming, movies, novels, music, or any other System form of entertainment or pleasure that you could possibly give up.

76. You cannot outgive Me. That's the bottom line. I will more than repay. You either believe that statement or you don't. If you believe it, then you can cut back happily, even if through your tears sometimes, because you know that better things await you. If you don't believe that I will more than repay, then you're going to struggle day in and day out, sometimes trying to stay within My boundaries and other times throwing them to the wind and indulging yourself, but all the while missing the fulfillment of knowing that you're obeying Me and shooting for the high prize of the calling which I have given you. What will your choice be?

77. Your life is a road of many choices, and as you place your will on the altar of My service, I will return to you the things that I know are either good for you or that you can

handle in smaller amounts, things that won't hurt your spirit or cause you to lose ground in the spirit. It's not all about sacrifice, sadness, and misery! It's about happiness and joy in serving Me! You can't figure it out in your carnal minds. It's impossible for some of you to understand how you will possibly be happy if you have to give up one or more of your favorite pastimes, or cut back considerably on the time you invest in them.

78. Well, to those of you who feel that way, I will say to you what I said to My first disciples, "Come and see!" You have to try it to prove My Words. You have to test the water to see if I'll hold you up and give you the power to walk on the water! I will not fail you. I will not let you languish in misery. I will come through for you and bring into your life the happiness, excitement, and joy that you need, I promise. *(End of message.)*

79. (Jesus:) I'm not giving you, My Family, a green light as far as indulging in worldly input. I'm giving you a yellow light, a "proceed with caution" reminder, a "proceed with prayer" message, lest you get hit by a speeding envoy of the Enemy or run into a trap of Pan or a tentacle of Bacchus.

80. But neither do I give you a red light, that you cannot indulge in worldly entertainment at all, for I would see you, My brides, grow stronger through making the proper choices and through your wise and Spirit-led decisions. I know that you will not make the right decisions all the time, for this is the nature of man. But even through your mistakes, you who are true disciples will grow closer to Me, learning where it's not at and becoming more firmly convinced in your hearts about where it is at.

81. Down this road past the lights you will also encounter many “yield” signs as reminders that you should yield your desires for worldly input to Me, just as you do any other desires in your life. Doing so will keep you from many accidents and problems, and ensure a safer journey through life. (*End of message.*)

In summary:

82. (Mama:) As with every other area of System input, our Good Shepherd is asking you to be much more vigilant and on guard when it comes to the influences of the world via computer games. Those of you who have played computer games in the past have been a bit disadvantaged, because while the issue of worldly input has been addressed many times, and certain specific avenues of worldly input had entire GNs dedicated to the topic (such as the Internet, movies, System music, etc.), there was never much specific counsel published regarding computer games. But now that the Lord has given us more in-depth counsel on the subject, He’s going to hold you more accountable as a result.

83. If you’re a computer game player, the first thing you should do is to ask your Husband if playing computer games is still within His will for you at this time in your life. If it is, then you’ll want to proceed with asking Him for specific guidelines as far as how much time is spiritually healthy for you to spend playing and how to ensure that it doesn’t take time away from other important things, what types of games you should play (within the boundaries and guidelines He’s given in this GN), what personal pitfalls you should watch out for, how to keep your gaming in check, how to guard against addiction, obsession, and the dulling of your spiritual senses, how to ensure that it’s not going to weaken you as a disciple, and any other questions He brings to mind.

84. Here, for your easy reference, are the P&P questions He gave in the preceding message:

- How do You see computer games in my life? Do You want me to give them up altogether? Or are You allowing them for me as a limited avenue of entertainment?
- How much time, specifically, either per week or per month, can I engage in computer games without it either setting me back or keeping me from moving forward spiritually? (This amount of time should not be more time than your Home sets overall for worldly input or System entertainment per week/month, and would have to be cut back if you’re taking in any other System entertainment.)

85. Computer game playing is also something you’ll need to discuss, pray about, and hear from the Lord about, and come to agreements on as a Home—just as the Lord is asking you to do with every other avenue of worldly input. The Lord has made it clear that computer games can be acceptable in your Homes as a form of entertainment, if kept in perspective, and if the Lord agrees with the amount and type of computer games that are played. You’ll also have to take into account what other avenues of worldly entertainment your Home partakes in, and balance things out accordingly. As you take the time to assimilate this counsel from the Lord, I know He will help you—as Homes and individuals—to make wise, prayerful, Spirit-led decisions.

86. Also, as you read in the first message above, the Lord is leaving the door cracked open for those of you who are 21 and over to play some computer games that have some non-graphic violence in them. This doesn’t necessarily mean that these games are automatically going to be good for you, or that all of them will be good for you, or that they’re the Lord’s highest will for you at this time in your life. The Lord is putting the ball in your court to pray about your gaming habits and make your decisions, just as He’s allowing us choice and

accountability in every other area of worldly entertainment, and then you're going to be fully responsible for your decisions as disciples.

87. Part of that responsibility is the understanding that violence in computer games, even when it is non-graphic, can have an effect on you—and that effect can be negative. It might not make you a violent person, but it will probably affect you in some way. Maybe the effect would simply be the greater likelihood of you acquiring an addiction to such games, or an effect could be that it makes you bored with other things. It's your responsibility to monitor the effect such games have on you—and ask your “buddy” to safeguard you. (Note: For more on this issue of the effects that violence can have on one's spiritual life, please see the following section, “The Effects of Violence.”)

88. Also, if you are over 21 and the Lord gives you the okay to occasionally play non-graphic violent games, then you'll need to be vigilant about checking with Him before you play, getting cleansed afterwards, as well as paying Him your spiritual “dues” beforehand. You will also need the personal conviction to know that your time spent gaming is going to benefit you more than it will negatively affect you. As the Lord has warned us in messages in previous “Shooting Straight” GNs on other worldly entertainment topics, every form of worldly input and entertainment has an effect.

89. I believe that this counsel from the Lord on computer games, as well as the other avenues of worldly entertainment, is a test of sorts. He wants to see how we will apply it to our lives. He wants to see if we're going to exhibit maturity and wisdom, and prove to Him our ability to be moderate in all things. Are we strong enough to handle it? If not, I wouldn't put it past the Lord to tighten things up in the future. If problems crop up within the Family as a result of this freedom, the Lord may very well reevaluate and reconsider His stance. If these types of computer games cannot be kept in check, and if you who play them go overboard,

then His counsel in the future may be different than what He has given at this time. So if you value this freedom, dear Family, use it wisely!

Key promise:

90. With the keys of wisdom and conviction, I will help you to learn how to relax and enjoy entertainment within the charmed circle of My protection, without endangering your spirit or weakening your spiritual walls of defense.

Challenging Thots:

91. (Dad:) If you want some great entertainment, tap into the power of Heaven and receive fresh visions, unlimited spirit trips, and complete access to the most interesting form of entertainment ever created—the mind of God! Heaven's wellsprings of entertainment are refreshing, invigorating, and exciting—and you can taste the delights as often as you like.



92. (Dad:) The majority of the “cool” and “in” games of the world unfortunately fall into the categories that you shouldn't be involved in or touching. That's just the way of the world, and as the Lord said, the world is at enmity with Him and His ways. So it shouldn't be surprising that following the Lord's way means giving up some of these things that the world finds so cool and great and fun. The obviously demonic and graphically violent games that abound today shouldn't be in Family Homes. If you get your fun and enjoyment from such games, then something needs to change in your heart and life if you want to be a disciple.



93. (Dad:) There has to be some personal conviction to want to keep your heart right with the Lord and your spirit clean. You also have to acknowledge that no matter what you personally feel about computer games and how they “do” or “don't” affect you, they do affect your spirit. If you don't keep to the Lord's standard, you will be polluted and your spirit will suffer as a result. If you're not being obedient to

the Lord's counsel, your spirit will suffer in some way; that's a fact. Maybe the suffering won't be a noticeable effect from the game itself, such as your spirit being polluted. The effect might not be anything that you feel is connected to the game itself. The effect could simply be a loss of the Lord's blessings in some other area of your life as a result of your disobedience. So it's well worth obeying what the Lord says—both in His written Word and His personal Words to you in prophecy. You can't go wrong, and you will be fully blessed, if you obey.

Dig deeper:

- "Loving Shepherding and Interaction—Charter Style," ML #3018:12, 47, 49, 53; Lifelines 22
- "Don't Get Caught in the Web," ML #3174:16–19, GN 779
- "How-to's of Home Education," ML #3189:180, 188–191, 193; GN 794
- "Dad's Challenge to Change," ML #3240:16–18, 33–34, GN 842
- "The Shakeup 2000—the S2K," ML #3257:127–128, 142, 151–153, GN 857
- "More on 'The Shakeup 2000,'" ML # 3262:15–21, 40–41, 43–45, 252, 254–261, 264, GN 863
- "The Era of Action!—Part 3," ML #3290:32–43, GN 996
- "Coming Persecution?" ML #3361:161, 168, GN 957
- "Are You a Delinquent Parent?" ML #3388:75, 77–82, GN 984
- "Solutions for Shepherds, Parents and Everyone," ML #3389:136–152, GN 985
- "The Professionals," ML #3399:110–111, 273–277, GN 993
- "Exposing Bacchus," ML #3402:52–54, Post-it GN #4
- "Gems and Jewels, Part 1," ML #3416:66–74, GN 1003
- "Issues, Part 14," ML #3442:93, 97–107, GN 1026
- "Renewal: The Big Picture," ML #3489:43–46, GN 1073
- "Deadly parallels in video games," END 10
- "When life imitates video," END 19

Additional reading:

94. (Jesus:) This is a message for you parents and teachers. Sadly, before the renewal, the practice of allowing children to sit for hours on end in front of a computer screen playing games was rampant, and this has had a negative effect on your children. The reason this has had a negative effect is that many times you'd let them play a game so that you didn't have to plan an activity for them or do something with them. This actually caused a distancing of your children from you. It separated them from the intimate relationship I wanted them to have with you as their parents and caregivers.

95. Hours spent in front of a computer game do not foster love, respect, friendship, and unity with your children—all of the things you will need to have when they hit the rough spots in their lives. Some children's lives had been made considerably more difficult by computer games, because they hadn't developed interpersonal skills of communication, and they didn't bond with their parents as they were growing up.

96. The last few years have seen a rise in the negative content of the computer games children have been allowed to play in their formative years, causing their attitudes to become warped by the values or morals (or lack thereof, I should say) that are found in games.

97. Instead of basing their decisions on godly mindsets, many had based them on the interactions they had with a computer game, a program, or—if they were to play on-line with other children—on System children's actions. This caused a faulty foundation to be built in their hearts, one that couldn't support the heavier and meatier things of the spirit, which they needed in order to become the disciples I have called you to raise them to be.

98. The negative effects of unsupervised hours of computer game play can be seen in the rebelliousness and lethargy that has been found in so many of the JETTs and junior teens, on down through the OCs and MCs. Even some of the YCs have been affected by this because

of the attitudes that each age group has seen adopted by those they look up to.

99. Childhood is meant to be an active time, filled with fun, activities, and adventure, challenges and thrills—not the lethargy-inducing pull of computer games. That's not to say that they can never play them, but when that becomes their primary form of entertainment, their spirits grow dull, they become sluggish, and they begin to not have any goals in their life. All of these things are detrimental, as I'm sure you'll agree.

100. What should be the guidelines for children's computer games? You need to make sure that they are getting an abundance of other activities besides computer games. That will make a very big difference to them. They may still enjoy the computer game times they have, but their spirits will be much more vibrant and excited to be serving Me and the lost.

101. You should be aware of the content of the games they're playing. That doesn't mean that you have to play the game yourself before you allow it, but you can be informed about it. You can look up reviews online to get an idea of the content, you can peek at it before you make a decision whether or not to allow them to play it, you can seek Me about it, and you can be around while your teen or child is playing and watch how it goes. And from all these things, you can make wise and prayerful shepherding decisions.

102. You, as parents, will have to decide how much time is acceptable for your children to play, within the guidelines of what your Home decides as far as collective System input. But remember, if they are given too much game time, they will become bored, unenthusiastic, lazy, and lethargic in other areas of their life. If too steady a diet of computer games is had by children, they can actually become more bored than if they were excited about outings, witnessing, winning souls, changing lives, scholastic adventures, arts and crafts, camping adventures, trips to the zoo, etc.—the many other things that can be done with children to inspire an active spiritual and physical life.

103. When children are young, they are forming their mindsets. They are deciding how they will approach life, what they'll do with their lives, and spending hours in front of a computer game because you as parents or teachers don't want to expend the effort to organize something more active for them is really sad. You will be ashamed one day when you find that the attitudes they've adopted are not yours or Mine, but rather those found in the worldly input they took in during all those hours that you let them sit in front of computer games. You'll find that they don't have the motivation or desire to do anything with their life, which will cause them to settle down and be bored with living for Me.

104. You have to instill that desire for an active lifestyle by doing activities with them and keeping them stirred up. Computer games inspire lethargy in children, not an active lifestyle, and that is something that you'll have to take into account when praying about how much time you want to let your kids have on the computer.

105. It's one thing for adults to play a computer game; generally they can keep it in the right place, or can be helped to do so. But for children, who are forming their outlooks on the world, it's sad when they spend too much time glued to the computer screen, sucking in useless entertainment instead of all the enriching, unpolluted fun they could be having.

106. They'll balk and want to sit down at the computer, but it's up to you to find ways to energize their lives, to make them want to go outside and have fun rather than sit in the house all day and waste away. Don't train couch potatoes—train disciples! Amen?

107. Children are the future, the hope of tomorrow, and what you feed them today will be what they grow into. The input you give them will be what their character will be made of. I need strong, valiant, on-the-attack new recruits! Don't fail Me by taking the lazy route of System entertainment. Give them a reason to serve Me, and you won't be disappointed. (*End of message.*)

The Effects of Violence

The issue:

108. (Mama:) Some of you who play computer games, watch movies, or read novels seem to feel that there's no harm in the "violence factor." Because you clearly realize that a game is "just a game," or a movie is "just a movie," or a book is "just a book," and it's not "real" violence, and because you'd never do anything like that in "real" life, you figure it doesn't have an effect on your mind, your attitudes, your reactions, or your spiritual life, and thus you're not as on guard as you should be.

109. There are many different types of violence—some really graphic, unnecessary, gory, and "in your face." And then there are other levels of violence in movies and computer games, for example, that are pretty tame by comparison, and even sometimes presented as humorous. But just because you're watching something, or playing a computer game that isn't "graphic" or "gory," that doesn't mean that it's not going to affect you. It probably will, as the Lord has warned us, so be wise and prayerful.

110. In order to help you to be more knowledgeable in knowing how viewing, reading about, or playing games with violence can affect you, especially if you don't pray beforehand and get cleansed afterward, following is a message from our Husband on the subject. This was specifically received when asking Him about graphic and vivid forms of violence and gore, but it's a good overview of His stance and views when it comes to physical violence and force, as well as a reminder that we need to be prayerful about everything that we take into our spirits, even if we think it doesn't affect us.

God's mind on the matter:

111. (Jesus:) Everything around you, everything you indulge in—what you smell, taste, touch, hear, and see—has an effect on you. Everything you subject your body or

spirit to has an effect, and that effect can either be positive or negative. The goal is that you, as My disciples, take in the good and positive and uplifting and inspiring and godly things, and reject whatever is negative and of the world.

112. Think about violence for a minute. Am I violent? Except when it comes to My judgments upon the wicked, no, I am not. Do I like to see people hurt or in pain? Is that My way? No. I am loving, kind, gentle, longsuffering, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and a friend to the underdog and those who are unlovely in the eyes of the world.

113. I never engaged in any form of violence against others when I was on Earth. I did enter the temple and I overturned the money-changers' tables twice. I made a whip of small cords to get their attention, and I poured out their money and chased them out for making a mockery of My Father's house, which was to be a place of prayer. I gave them a well-deserved shakeup, but I didn't hurt anyone in the process. This was righteous indignation and something My Father directly led Me to do as I desperately prayed for His leading.

114. This was a rare case and cannot be compared to genuine violence in terms of the blood, guts and gore that is prevalent in the world today, not only in the movies or in computer games, but in real life. The only hurt that came to the moneychangers in the temple was to their pride and their pocketbook; no physical harm came to them.

115. Was it ever recorded in the Gospels that I hurt anyone, that I hit anyone, that I inflicted pain on anyone? No. The records of My life show that I did exactly the opposite. I loved, I healed, I restored, I brought peace, and I spoke words of compassion. I said, "Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you" (Mat.5:44).

116. Violence was never a part of My life, and I never enjoyed viewing violence or violent acts either. When one of My disciples cut off the ear of the high priest's servant who was among those ordered to take Me away, I im-

mediately asked him to put away the sword, and I touched and healed the man. I admonished My disciples that all who take up the sword in this way will perish with the sword. (Luke 22:50–51; Mat.26:52). Even though two of My disciples carried swords, it was for their protection, for self-defense, not for offense.

117. It grieved Me to see people in pain and suffering, which is why I was moved to heal and save and deliver so many from the difficulties and diseases of the flesh. If I did not enjoy or appreciate or accept or tolerate violence, why should you? If you are aiming to be like Me—a follower of Me, My disciple—that’s not like Me.

118. My rejection and hatred of violence and pain and suffering—as well as My great love for mankind—was why I died on the cross for your sins. I didn’t want you to have to suffer for your sins, or pay the brutal price of being punished for your mistakes. So I took the violence for you, I took the pain for you, and I bled and died for you.

119. As a disciple, you are to be like Me. That means rejecting the violent ways of the world, the violent nature of man. As a disciple you should hate pain and suffering, not accept it. Today the world is full of horrible violence—violent movies, violent computer games, violent novels, violent people, and violent attitudes. But you, My children, are to be in the world but not of the world. You are to rise above the base ways of the world and let My Spirit prevail in your lives—My Spirit of love, acceptance, gentleness, and compassion. A love for violence, or even a tolerance of violence, is unacceptable in My sight.

120. I can see some of you rolling your eyes and thinking, “Surely, Lord, You can’t be saying that we can’t ever watch a violent movie, or that we can’t ever play a computer game (or read a book) that has a smidgen of violence in it? That’s really unrealistic.” You’re right; it is unrealistic in this day and age, because the world you live in is so violent. You’re also right that I’m not saying you can never ever again view a violent act of any kind. Sometimes it’s unavoidable. Sometimes

there is a good movie that I give you permission to see that might have a little bit of violence in it, for example. Sometimes a computer game with non-graphic violence is acceptable for those 21 and over.

121. But the problem is that within the Family these types of exceptions have grown to where they have become more accepted, more normal. It’s become more the rule now, rather than the exception. Some people’s personal tolerance for violence has gotten out of hand and has reached ungodly limits. That’s why I’m making it very clear now, in this message, where I stand and what My view on violence is.

122. It’s wrong when you get to the point that you enjoy violence, when you look forward to movies or games or books with graphic violence and gore—and even go out of your way to see, play, or read them. I’m sorry to say that some of you have gotten to this point, or you’re nearly there. You have become dull in your spiritual senses, because you have rejected My admonitions to protect your spirits, and to keep your spirits pure and unadulterated before Me.

123. The truth is that viewing violence (or reading about violence) regularly is not good for you. It harms your spirit, and I’m disappointed that some of you have been doing it far too much. This area of disobedience in your life may not have turned you into an outwardly violent person, but it’s affected you more than you realize, in more ways than you know. It has weakened you spiritually, and it has worn away at your convictions.

124. Viewing or reading about a few violent acts every so often—such as in a movie, a computer game, or novel—is not going to permanently harm you if you cleanse your spirit, if you take My warnings seriously, and if you do your part to eschew the evil. However, that’s a big “if”—and many of you have not been fulfilling your part of the bargain.

125. Many within the Family have grown accustomed to accepting violence more and more—in movies, in books, and in computer

games. Some of you have developed a pretty unhealthy attitude toward it, to where you actually look forward to playing computer games that are solely violent, or watching movies that are riddled with violence, or reading books of the same kind. This displeases Me, because this is not the way that I am. I am love, I am peace, I am gentleness. My Spirit does not dwell where a violent spirit dwells.

126. A lust and desire for violence and pain and suffering is not My way. Or if you're not at the point where you're lusting after violence and desiring it, but your senses have become dull to it, then you're also being negatively affected by this inroad of the Enemy in your life. If you watch violence and think you're not affected by it, and dismiss any concerns because you're "strong enough to take it," I must tell you that you're wrong. It has affected you; you're letting evil into your life, even if you don't realize it.

127. Many of you feel that violence doesn't affect you. You pride yourself in being able to "take it," in having "tough skin." Many of you even look down on those who are negatively affected by violent or graphic scenes in movies, for example, and you think they're just wimps for being so weak. Often those who are affected by violence are those who are more spiritually sensitive—something that you who are so "unaffected" could be a lot more of yourselves.

128. You may think you're not affected, but just because you're not outwardly affected doesn't mean your spirit isn't affected. Your spirit is always affected by everything, whether you realize it or not, and the effect violence (especially if it is vivid and graphic) has on your spirit is not usually a good one, believe Me. Violence is not My way, it's not of Me, and if you enjoy it or don't see anything wrong with it, then there's a good chance your appetite is perverted, and you need to pray for a healthier spiritual appetite.

129. When you're considering watching a movie that contains violence, or playing a violent computer game, or reading a graphic novel, ask yourself (or better yet, ask Me) a

few questions: Would I watch this movie or play this game or read this book with Jesus, or with Mama, or with Peter? Is it going to do anything good for me spiritually? Is it going to enhance my discipleship? Is it going to strengthen my spiritual life? Does the good in what I am about to view, play, or read outweigh the negative? Is it worth it for me to tolerate this level of violence just because I want to watch, play or read this—especially if it's graphic or unpleasant violence? Should I be doing it as Your disciple, as someone whose life's vocation is to emanate the fruits of Your Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance?

130. You are much more accountable today than you ever have been before regarding what you allow your spirit to drink in. What you indulged in before is no longer acceptable today. What I winked at before, I will no longer wink at in the future. You are growing up in spirit, you are maturing as My disciples, and the lust, desire, or just plain acceptance of violence is one of those "childish" things that you, My disciples, need to forsake in place of the better gifts of My Spirit I will give you.

131. You are in the world, and the world is full of violence, so of course you will come into contact with it from time to time. But be mature when you do, and always pray desperately for My Spirit of love and peace to cleanse you from the evil of violence. Remember, it affects you whether you think it does or not. (*End of message.*)

In summary:

132. (Mama:) Every computer game and movie and novel will affect you in some way. So please prayerfully choose all your System input and activities wisely, and select those that do not negatively affect your spirit. Remember that violence can harm your spirit, whether you realize it or not.

133. In all that you do and in every choice you make, consider the value of your disciple-

ship life! Do those things that are going to please the Lord and strengthen your spirit, even if it means a physical sacrifice. Ask the Lord for His guidelines and safeguards in prophecy regarding any System input you take in, because He knows what’s best for you, even if you don’t.

Key promise:

134. If you want My will above your own, My thoughts in place of yours, and the full meat of My truth, claim the keys of yieldedness and you will receive the revelations of My Spirit.

Dig deeper:

- ☐ “Movies for Children,” ML #1137:18–19, 33–37, Vol.11
- ☐ “My Kind of Movies,” ML #2452:4–5, 27, 30–33, Vol.18
- ☐ “You Are What You Watch,” ML #3182:6–11, 22–24, 55–66, GN 787
- ☐ “Charter Responsibilities,” ML #3197:52–55, 61–67, GN 803
- ☐ “More on ‘The Shakeup 2000,’” ML #3262:40–41, GN 863
- ☐ “Understanding Prophecy, Part 2,” ML #3304:100–110, 119–120, GN 905
- ☐ “Reading and Viewing,” #1, 12, 13, 23, MOP 2
- ☐ Articles and messages from the END:
 - END 4: “Want to Raise Kids from Hell? Here’s a How-to Primer” and “It’s only a movie?”
 - END 5: “TV Violence and Values”
 - END 10: “Deadly parallels in video games”
 - END 19: “When life imitates video”

Challenging That:

135. (Dad:) If something is going to harm your spirit, hinder your discipleship, or cause you to be less effective in your service for the Lord, then it’s probably something you should drastically minimize or avoid altogether. Your discipleship is important, so anything in your life that could even possibly have the potential to sabotage your spiritual life should be weighed in the balances and assessed—and, if necessary, eliminated.

Other Inroads of the World

The issue:

136. (Mama:) When most people think of worldliness, and allowing the world into their lives, they think of the major forms of worldly entertainment—the Internet, movies, computer games, System music, novels, TV, etc. We’ve addressed all of these things in Shooting Straight issues already. However, since we are in the mode of assessing our spiritual lives, our discipleship, and how much we allow the world and its ways into our lives, the Lord showed that it would be important to touch on some other forms of worldliness or inroads of the world that aren’t specifically under the umbrella of worldly entertainment, things that we don’t often think about or focus on. Sometimes they do come about as a result of certain types of entertainment that we partake of, but not always.

137. This time right after the renewal is probably one of the best times for you to look at these areas of your life that you might not have thought much about before. You’ve been through the renewal, a time when the Lord asked you to forsake worldly entertainment, but when you look at your life there are probably some viewpoints, obsessions, addictions, or attitudes that are inroads of the world, or ways the world has affected you. As the Lord said in “Renewal: The Challenge”: “System input is one area or inroad of the Enemy, but there are many others.... All of these are as important to safeguard each other in as is the area of System input.” (ML #3511:10, GN 1097)

138. I asked a few groups of people in some of our WS units to get together and brainstorm this topic. They first discussed things they had noticed in themselves during the renewal, and then went on from there to brainstorm any other examples that came to mind. They came up with a lot of points, and since it’s all very good food for thought and might make a good springboard for personal

heart-searching, I decided to include the list here for your interest.

139. Some of these topics have already been addressed in previous Shooting Straight issues, and others we might possibly address in more detail in future Shooting Straight GNs. So please bear in mind that these are prompters, very short points, or things to think about, and we aren't able to include counsel on each one—nor is this by any means a complete list. So if something stands out to you as being a possible problem in your life, please take it to the Lord and ask for His personalized counsel on the issue. It's good for us all to, every so often, take a look at the areas of our lives we don't normally consider or think about, and see if we've been affected by the ways, mindsets, or attitudes of the world.

140. Another point to keep in mind when reading this list is that some of the things mentioned—like eating healthily, exercising, taking care of yourself and your physical appearance, etc.—are actually good and necessary things, if kept in moderation. You need to exercise, you need to take care of yourself, and you need to eat well, as Dad has taught us from the very beginning. But there is a point where you can go too far in some of these things and form worldly mindsets regarding them. That's the point of this list—to highlight obsessions, addictions, and worldly mindsets, not things that are necessary and good and important to have in our lives in moderation.

141. Also, when you're reading this list and you notice that addictions are mentioned, remember the Lord's definition of addictions, published in "Renewal: The Big Picture":

Addictions can be very mild or extremely severe. In My eyes, an addiction can be anything from a habit or desire or interest that's just a little bit too important to you, to something that is seriously damaging your service to Me. An addiction could be anything that you sometimes, or often, put before one or many of the important

things in life, such as your time with Me, your fellowship with others, or time spent investing in your Home and children and work for Me. An addiction doesn't have to be something huge that you can't physically live without. My definition is much broader. An addiction could be anything you do regularly or repeatedly that is just a little bit too important to you, or that hinders you in some way, or that wastes time, or that you have made a god of in your life, or that bears bad fruit, or that takes the place of the "better" things in your life (ML #3489:27, GN 1073).

Examples of other forms of "worldliness":

1) Being overly intrigued with and into fast, expensive super cars, or just cars in general. You might not read books about them, or play racing computer games, or watch every single movie about cars, but you might read a lot of bits and pieces about them in magazines and on the Internet, talk about them frequently, and make it your goal to become an expert on extremely expensive cars.

2) Constantly keeping up with celebrities and having an excessive fascination for knowing every detail about their lives, including completely useless information and trivia.

3) Having a fascination for appearing intellectual. This is sometimes manifested by excessive studying of dictionaries, bits and pieces of higher math, obscure history, or historical trivia, with the primary purpose of trying to impress others and appear smart in a worldly way.

4) Addiction to home décor, or a certain style of décor. Some people like to live in nice surroundings or be surrounded by pretty pictures, matching furniture and curtains or trinkets that are pleasant to look at. While it's important to keep your Home looking nice for the sake of "reaching the rich" and your sample to the sheep, it can be an inroad of the world when you become so obsessed with "making a perfect home" that

you spend an inordinate amount of time looking for decorations, studying worldly magazines, or going on the Internet to find ideas.

5) Having a worldly, vain attitude about personal health and fitness, or an addiction to bodybuilding and bodily improvement—instead of exercising regularly for the sake of being fit for the Lord’s service. Spending way too much time lifting weights, having get-out, or playing sports, spending a lot of time reading about bodybuilding from magazines or on the Internet, and having an inordinate fascination for worldly bodybuilders and/or built-up actors.

6) Anorexia/bulimia, or a calorie, weight, fat obsession. An ungodly determination to not gain weight. Working out extra hard or doing extreme things if you notice you gain a kilo or two.

7) Fascination for the military and modern or ancient machines and weapons of war, which can result in frequently reading about war, talking about it, and generally having the wrong attitudes about it.

8) Spending an inordinate and unnecessary amount of time on your personal appearance—doing hair treatments, curling hair, dying hair, gelling hair, straightening hair, styling hair, overusing creams and beauty products, tweezing your eyebrows to perfection, etc.

9) Hanging out with System friends. Getting into clubbing and fellowshiping with them on their turf, rather than witnessing to them. Not having conviction to deliver the truth; merely trying to fit in and be friends with them. (You also can’t minimize the System music playing around you.)

10) Discontentment with not having a lot of personal money like some in the System have, and comparing with those in the world who have more money than you, more clothes than you, more things than you, etc.

11) Putting too much stock in sun signs. There is some merit to understanding them, but it can also become an obsession, to where you’re too into it, and it causes you to box people in or prejudice them based on their sun sign.

12) Being excessively into something, even if it’s a good thing, such as a hobby or special interest, to where it becomes an obsession.

The desire to excel or specialize in something to the point that it becomes a distraction to your discipleship life, or perhaps takes away time you could be investing in becoming a professional within the Family—such as a professional fundraiser, witnesser, provisioner, teacher, etc.

13) Worldly attitudes toward sex. For example, saying you don’t need affection, love, sex, and acting like it’s beneath you. Being too proud to ask for sex, and making others ask or beg you. Being sexually bound, and having the “saving yourself for marriage” mentality. Having unhealthy views on what is sexy and what isn’t, according to worldly standards. Wanting to know everything about sex, wanting to be “the best” and most skillful, knowledgeable, etc.; studying manuals and researching online and elsewhere; being obsessed with being on the “cutting edge” sexually and doing the most daring, striking, inventive things—not necessarily even bad or dark or non-Shooting-Straight-friendly things.

14) Being too into electronic gadgets: having lots of gizmos, always trying to upgrade to the latest, and talking about it a lot. Or upgrading your computers, and computer programs, excessively—not just for the sake of your job for the Lord, but so that you can have the latest and the greatest equipment.

15) Getting too into worldly humor and foolishness.

16) Getting too into a certain style of clothing (which can sometimes include hair, makeup, attitude, and mannerisms) to portray a certain image and spirit. For example: wearing fatigues and army boots to portray the “military look,” doing the “surfer dude” thing, taking on the “gothic” style in dress and makeup, etc.

17) Being obsessed with fashion and trends, and only wearing whatever types of clothing and accessories are “in style.”

18) Obsessions with “quality,” such as brand name clothing or things, high-quality food

and beverages, or an overemphasis on it. Having or buying things that are good quality can be a good thing, as Dad taught us in “Expensive Bargains,” because cheap bargains can be a big waste of the Lord’s money in the long run. But it can go beyond that, to where you are so concerned about “quality,” not for the sake of saving money, but because it’s a pride trip to be “refined” and have expensive things, or because it’s an obsession to have brand name items.

19) Projecting a “tough” image or a strong “single” image: “Nobody can hurt me. Nobody can get close to me. I don’t need anyone.” Having a macho mentality—an attitude that women can’t do certain things, like drive or be in leadership, and that it’s beneath men to do things like laundry, dishes, housework, or taking care of the children. And women taking on women’s lib mindsets, not accepting their role as women.

20) Always being on a “trip” or “obsessing” about something—clothes, diet, fitness fads, sports, or knowledge of any kind—even a number of different things at the same time.

21) Modeling your life after people in the world, or getting into what someone(s) in the System does, and copying their trends and styles. You see an image (in a movie, magazine, or on the Internet) of a person who seems to have everything together, or someone who’s a picture of Mr. Ultra-Intelligent, or the smartest geek in the world, and you try to fashion your life after them.

22) Collecting anything (even good things) in excess, such as knickknacks, candles, shoes, beauty products, or whatever. An addiction to buying or collecting things you don’t need, especially when you get them for “good deals,” or for free.

23) Worldly attitudes regarding alcoholic beverages. For example, trying to drink as much as possible, or being too into getting “the best” drinks, feeling like you can’t have fun without alcohol, being dependent on it, wanting to appear very knowledgeable about alcohol trivia, and then wasting a lot of time acquiring that knowledge, etc.

24) Obsession with sports (playing, watching, thinking about and following their progress), and an addiction to competition.

25) Addiction to extreme sports, daring maneuvers, taking risks, and living “on the edge.”

26) Shallow and worldly mindsets regarding relationships. For example, not wanting to get together with someone unless they’re “good looking,” and talking about other couples as being good for each other because they’re so “good looking.”

27) Priding yourself in having System mindsets regarding relationships and marriage—such as being proud of being jealous, not sharing your husband or wife, not living the Law of Love because you are “above it” and you know better, you’re not going to risk living the Law of Love in case something goes wrong and harms your relationship, etc.

28) Overly into being “professional” in your work, or overly consumed with “being good at” what you do, including learning all the lingo and reading all the input from the world related to your ministry or job for the Lord, which can lead to pride, putting yourself above others, leaning on the arm of the flesh, losing your God-given anointing, or desiring to use your talents to make money.

29) Obsession with health food and nutrition. It’s good to take care of your body, but you can go overboard. You can be obsessed with certain types of “healthy food” and vitamins and supplements, or go to extremes, to the point that you aren’t really striking a proper balance in your diet and could be depriving your body of important essential nutrients. This is one such example of a number of “extremes” you can go to in the health/food/nutrition department.

30) Being obsessed with specialized or fad diets that go beyond normal healthy eating.

31) Being too concerned with image, the way you appear to people, the way you are perceived; whenever you say something you wonder what you sound like, or you look in

the mirror every time you see one. Not wanting people to take photos of you, etc.

32) Being obsessed with how you “don’t want to get old,” and that you’re going to do all you can to stay “young forever.” Getting into ways the world “beats” the aging process.

33) Getting your perspective of what is “good looking” or “sexy” from models and magazines and other worldly information sources, and then comparing yourself and everyone else to that standard.

34) Unhealthy attitudes toward makeup. Being so obsessed that you can never go a day without makeup; you wake up first thing in the morning and put it on; you won’t even let your mate see you without makeup, etc.

35) Compromising and conforming to the world if you hold a System job, even for a legitimate reason (such as for a visa, etc).

36) Addictions to shopping, hanging out in malls, etc.

37) If you’re in a high-profile ministry, getting lifted up and thinking you’re a star, when it’s the Lord’s anointing.

38) Talking too much about worldly entertainment. For example, quoting movie lines, talking about recent movies, singing System songs, telling jokes, letting movie slang and speech into your everyday life and conversations. Being full of this kind of thing.

39) Priding yourself in supporting, researching, and arguing things that oppose the Word or Family beliefs. For example, views on euthanasia, abortion, contraception, etc. Being proud about the fact that you have your own philosophies and feelings on things, even if they’re not in line with the Word.

40) Not accepting the Word by faith, unless it’s explained in a logical and acceptable way or you’re given an airtight argument that satisfies your carnal mind.

41) Belittling Family material on health and other issues, and instead wanting to do a lot of research to see what the System has to say.

42) Fascination for martial arts, or any other form of violence.

43) Automatically relying on medicines or the medical system when you’re sick, rather than asking the Lord, depending on prayer, and having faith. For example, taking painkillers every time you have a headache or pain. Defaulting to going the medical route because it’s so “easy,” and losing the simple faith you once had. Going to worldly sources of information—such as books, the Internet, etc.—to find out what someone is sick with, or how to treat a sickness, instead of asking the Lord first, or acknowledging Him or His power to heal and deliver.

44) A fascination for drugs. Not taking them (which is an excommunicable offense), but being overly interested in them and their effects. Being up on the latest illicit drugs, their effects, cost, and other trivia.

45) Getting too into buying and selling on Internet sites and online auctions.

46) Talking about the things of the world more than the things of the spirit, and when talking about the spiritual, apologizing for it. For example, saying things like, “I’m sorry, this might sound kind of spiritual...” Or being afraid to speak up and say, “Shall we have some praise time while we’re waiting?” Or feeling funny about bringing up cool things from the Word in conversations, etc. An attitude that it’s okay to use the new weapons and be “spiritual” when it’s “spiritual time,” but the rest of the time you talk about worldly things.

47) Putting fellowships and parties above other more important things, such as your children or your sheep.

48) Not being inspired about the Christian lifestyle, where everything changes and there’s hard work and sacrifice. Wishing your life was like a “perfect” Systemite, as portrayed on TV, in movies, magazines, etc. Wishing you lived the stereotypical yet totally unrealistic life, with the perfect little family, in the perfect house, with all the modern conveniences, etc.

49) Regularly using famous worldly people as your yardstick for judging and comparing people. Even comparing Family people to celebrities in their looks, saying, “You look like so-and-so actor.”

50) Getting overly obsessed with particular movies and themes, such as “Lord of the Rings,” “The Matrix,” “Star Wars,” etc. Or letting your children get overly obsessed with certain things like “Veggie Tales,” “Bob the Builder,” etc.

51) Getting too into worldly politics.

52) Being nationalistic and thinking that “your country” is best, etc.

53) Generation-gap attitudes.

54) Addictions to certain foods, such as soft drinks, sweets, or chocolates. Going overboard on the Charter clause that such foods may be okay on “unavoidable or appropriate occasions,” and making such occasions the rule rather than the exception.

55) Conforming to the world when celebrating things like Christmas, New Years, birthdays, Easter, weddings, etc. Feeling like you have to do things the way the world does, traditionally, and can’t expand your horizons or ask the Lord for new and different ideas. Or being overly sentimental about birthdays or holidays.

56) Comparing things in your life with things in the world—whether it’s your work or your personal life. Thinking that you have to do things the way the world does.

57) Excessively daydreaming about what things would be like if you were in the System, often especially related to worldly success.

58) Selfishness. Looking out for number one.

59) Labeling people and categorizing them according to worldly standards and stereotypes. Putting women in a box. Putting men in a box. Putting anyone in a box.

60) Churchy attitudes. Reading and researching the writings of System Christians, thinking they have hit on something better or more successful than the Family.

61) Putting anything to do with the Lord or that’s spiritual in one category, and parties and everything carnal and “fun” into its own category. Thinking the two don’t mix, or it’s not going to be as much fun if you do mix them.

62) Not being open to things like marriage, having children, etc.

God’s mind on the matter:

142. (Jesus:) It’s naïve to think that the only inroads of the world in your lives are the real obvious ones like the forms of worldly entertainment. A wise disciple will look deeper, further, and check every aspect of his spiritual life, and leave no stone unturned when it comes to enacting change and revolution. A disciple is one who doesn’t want his spiritual life to be spoiled or tarnished with the rust of the world and its ways.

143. You, My brides, are learning more about what it means to be in the world but not of the world. So if there’s anything “of” the world in your heart and life, it’s worth making the effort to overcome it, to get rid of it, so that you can be a better conduit of My Spirit and a more dedicated and focused disciple. This is not a work of the flesh, but a work of My Spirit—simply asking Me what areas of your life you have allowed the world to enter—either through addictions, attitudes, habits, or hang-ups.

144. There are a lot of things in the world that are nice, that are fun, and that I’ve given to you for your work and even for your enjoyment. I created, or inspired man to invent, most of the things you use for your work for Me, and even the things you enjoy or find attractive in the world. But they’re all for you to use for My glory, and they should never use you. You’re in the world, but you’re not of the world.

145. I want each of you to take a look at your lives and think about what attitudes or addictions you have that are worldly. Is there something in the world that you have an unhealthy fascination for, or an addiction to, or are obsessed with? Are there any attitudes or viewpoints you have that you have formed as a result of influ-

ences from the world? In what areas of your life do you think like the world? Do you have worldly standards regarding anything in your life? Do you look more to the world than to the Word? Are you acting and thinking like a disciple?

146. A disciple is someone who refuses to live his life by the standards of the world. A disciple is one who is repulsed by the lukewarm, compromising ways of the world. A disciple is always on the lookout for worldly inroads, even the less obvious kind—not to travel those roads, but to seal them off. A disciple prides himself in being revolutionary and dropped out. A disciple's creed is to live God's rules and despise the ways and thoughts of man. A disciple never feels radical enough, and is always looking for ways to become more heavenly minded and less attached to the things and attitudes of the world.

147. A disciple is someone whose primary goal in life is to serve God and not mammon. A disciple is a believer and doer of the Word, and not a follower of the ways of the world. A disciple is a unique individual, building his life on the foundation of truth, not a commonplace flatlander whose life is built on sinking sand. A disciple is a world changer, not a world conformer. A disciple is always determined to seek My mind in all things and to never accept the wisdom of man on a whim. A disciple is a seeker of truth—My truth. A disciple doesn't settle for anything but the best—My best.

148. A disciple is always determined to make a mark—a mark of love, a mark of sacrifice, a mark of truth, a mark of conviction! A disciple desires to be like Me and those in My heavenly realm—not the stars and celebrities of the world. A disciple's role models are those in the realm of the spirit, or those serving Me wholeheartedly on Earth, and not those who are chained to the stakes of the System. A disciple wakes up every morning wondering what new and different thing I'm going to bring his way, something he would never experience or know if he was part of the world and living its way.

149. A disciple is “a fool for My sake,” not a gutless coward who never wants to buck the

tide. A disciple is free like a bird in the spirit, not in a cage of worldly mindsets. A disciple is cool, in vogue, and trendy, because he's doing the things that really count, living a life that really matters, and stacking up rewards in another world that are never going to tarnish or disappear.

150. A disciple might not have the latest and greatest car, or a fancy modern house with all the latest conveniences, or a wardrobe full of designer clothes, or a pocket full of money to spend on whatever he likes, or a magazine-perfect body, or a life full of worldly fame and fortune. But every disciple is a star in My world—the real world—the only place where being a star matters.

151. I want you, My disciples, to change your focus. Instead of trying to conform to the world and its ways, make an about-face and completely change the way you do things, the way you think. Quit trying to be acceptable to the world, or living your life according to worldly standards, or thinking about things the way Systemites do! Start being proud of being different, dropped out! Realize it's cool to think differently, act differently, and believe different things! Don't try to be what you're not (a worldling)! Be what you are (a revolutionary disciple)!

152. If you don't feel much like a revolutionary disciple and if you don't feel like you are living up to this high standard, don't get discouraged or condemned about it. Just determine in your heart to keep striving for the ultimate goal, which is unswerving and wholehearted discipleship! You're never going to be perfect, but you should be aiming to be the best disciple you can be, and doing your best to exhibit the full fruits of discipleship in your life, and avoid promoting the elements of the world at all costs.

153. You have nothing to be ashamed of, and everything to be proud of—in a good way! It's only when you truly start realizing your riches in the spirit, the value of your uniqueness and differences, that you'll be able to start reaping the harvest in full. You won't be able to sell anyone else on your product (your life for Me) if you don't start acting

like it's the greatest thing going and that you're sold on it! Those in the world promote their ways, so why don't you actively promote My ways more?

154. Let the world do its thing and go its own way—you do your thing and go My way!

A disciple should never be ashamed of who he is, or the life he lives, or what he believes! A disciple should never try to do things like the world, or be like those in the world, or think the way millions of lost people in the world do. A disciple knows better, because he's connected to Me and My Spirit. He's living in a realm the worldlings don't even know about—but hopefully will know about if My disciples teach them and win them.

155. Quit letting the world teach and train you how to live. Get out there and teach and train them how to live. They're the ones who should be copying you, not the other way around. So be that sample! Be that disciple! Be proud of who you are, and live accordingly. The world and its ways and thoughts and mindsets and attitudes are not for you. You're a disciple!—Remember that! *(End of message.)*

156. (Question:) In this message the Lord says a bit about “good pride.” He says things like, “A disciple prides himself in being revolutionary and dropped out.” And, “Start being proud of being different, dropped out!” Usually we think of pride, or being proud, as a very bad thing—something to avoid and be rid of at all costs. But is it okay to use this word “pride” or “proud” when we're talking about our heritage and life for the Lord?

157. (Jesus:) There is such a thing as godly pride, and it's a good thing. Far too many within My Family do not have this kind of godly pride, and you need it. Too many of you are instead intimidated by the world, and you al-

low the Enemy to tempt you to feel inferior, or to feel as if living My ways and obeying My truth is something you should be ashamed of.

158. I call you, My disciples, to be proud of being revolutionary, to be proud of being dropped out, free, different, and iconoclastic! This pride I speak of is different than the Devil's pride—in fact, it's the complete opposite. Why can't My children manifest godly pride—not in a self-righteous, condescending, unloving way, but in a beautiful, conviction-filled way?

159. Only when you, My disciples, truly understand what you possess in terms of spiritual wealth, and only when you are proud of your heritage and all of the blessings I have given you, will you be able to fulfill your final destiny. *(End of message.)*

Additional reading:

160. (Question:) Is it ever okay to be “obsessed” with something? Or is it never appropriate? Could you get too into something simple, wholesome, and good—like an activity, a hobby, or like—and spend too much time on it to the point that it pulls you away from the Lord?

161. (Jesus:) Whenever you're trying to assess whether you're too “obsessed” with something, or whether something is too important in your life, here are a few good questions to ask yourself:

162. —“If what I like was taken away from me, would I be happy without it?” If you wouldn't be willing to give it up, or would have a very difficult time giving it up, chances are it's too important to you.

163. —“What effect does this thing I'm into have on me?” Do I put it before the Lord, or before other important things in my life like

fellowshipping with others?” If you put anything before Me and the important things in your life, it’s too important to you and you’re not in a healthy state spiritually.

164. The problem isn’t usually what you’re into or what you intensely like. There are a lot of things you can enjoy, and that are fully within My will for you to partake of. But the “intense like” becomes a problem when it becomes too big to you, when it becomes too important in your life, and when it begins to consume you. When it’s what you’re thinking about the majority of the time, what comes out of your mouth regularly, and what is often put before Me and others, then you need to reconsider whether it should even be a part of your life at all.

165. There are lots of nice things in the world, lots of things for you to enjoy and partake of, but having a healthy moderation and balance is the key. Also, remember that love is the most important thing. If whatever you’re into causes you to think mostly about yourself and forget about others, if it causes you to become selfish in any way, then it’s wrong. Are you spending most of your free time giving to Me and investing in others? Or is most of your time spent on yourself, and in pursuit of personal happiness, improvement, or relaxation?

166. There’s a place for everything—at least everything good and godly—in your lives, My brides. But if the place for anything—a like, a hobby, or an activity—becomes too predominant or too important, then it has overstepped its boundaries and I can no longer bless it. Then even a good thing can become a detriment to your spiritual life. (*End of message.*)

In summary:

167. (Mama:) Remaining clean and dropped out and pure and revolutionary in this day and age is no small feat. But that revolutionary, dropped-out, be-not-conformed-to-this-world spirit is our goal as disciples. It’s what we should be aiming for and what we should be claiming in prayer—and by the power of the keys of discipleship—every day! No matter what else we like or

are into, these things should never distract or take away from our discipleship.

Key promise:

168. There is nothing in this world that can negatively affect your spirit or water down your conviction, if you claim the keys of discipleship to strengthen your resolve and turn your decisions into unbreakable commitments.

Dig deeper:

- “Use It,” ML #27:7–9, DB 4
- “Jesus People?—Or Revolution,” ML #148:1–14, 18, 20–22, DB 4
- “Teaching Great Masters,” ML #996:1, 3–5, 7, 9, 11, 20, 21, DB 7
- “I Am a Stranger Here,” ML #1533:7, 10, 16–18, 27–30, GN Book 12
- “Revolution!—For Jesus,” ML #1963:1–4, 7–13, 17–21, 43–46, 51, 53, DB 8
- “To Whom Will You Go?” ML #1966:21–27, DB 8
- “Worldly?—Or Free?” ML #3233:3–4, 15–38, 42–47, 50–62, GN 836
- “Full Possession,” ML #3376:5, 8, 36–52, GN 973
- “What Does It Mean To Be Truly Revolutionary?” Maria #44, DB 3
- FJWL 1: #219, 370
- FJWL 2: #177, 434
- “The Christian’s Relationship to Worldly Society,” 1–3, 5, 11, Word Basics
- “Being a World-Class Christian,” END 57

Challenging That:

169. (Dad:) Make a dent in life by being truly different and separated from the world! Some people will love you, and some will hate you, but you’ll make your mark in Heaven and carve out for yourself a place in the hall of God’s heroes! In this day and age, there’s nothing worse for you than being a part of the worldly system and its ways, and nothing better than being an on-fire revolutionary for Jesus! God didn’t make a mistake by having you be a part of His Family at this time: You’re destined to make a difference and be honored forever for the choices you make in this life to sacrifice, obey, and commit!