

Excerpts for contemplation, discussion, and application from this week's issue of THE LOOKOUT.

The Hidden Power of True Service (pages 4 & 5)

"Fanny J. Crosby . . . believed with all her heart that the Lord intended her to live in physical darkness 'so as to be better prepared to sing his praises and incite others to do so.'"

- What "liabilities" do you have that have enhanced your service to God? Explain.

"Audrey Wetherell Johnson . . . was eager to reach the unreached, not teach those who already had been taught!"

- Describe a time when your idea of what you thought you should be doing differed from God's.

Me? A Model? (pages 6 & 7)

"Judging often seems inherent in mother-daughter relationships."

- If the above statement is true, why is this so? If so, how does this principle affect other relationships?

"Child psychologist Sarah Chana Radcliffe says that in a child's mind it takes four positive statements to offset one negative comment."

- Why do you think this is true?

"As mothers and daughters, we can give each other material gifts for Mother's Day or birthdays, but one of the greatest gifts we can give is attention."

- What's the greatest gift you received from your mother?

Things My Daughter Said We Did Right (page 8)

"Sometimes we missed a night or two. But we endeavored to set aside a few minutes each night for family devotions."

- What might this daily practice do for a child's view of his parents? Of the world? Of God?
- Have you tried conducting family devotions in your home? If so, how did it work?

"I have surrounded my children with prayer and continue to do so."

- Who has impacted your life through prayer? For whom do you pray?

The Work of His Hands (page 9)

"God dealt with me through my gentle and tender mentor by slowly softening my heart, showing me unrestrained mercy and grace."

- How have you learned about mercy and grace? How has that lesson changed you?

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4

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Commandment #5

Some people (myself included) are blessed to have been raised by parents who serve the Lord. For others, days like Mother's Day are less of an occasion for celebration.

A woman in our house church (I'll call her Grace) grew up in unbelievably challenging circumstances. Abused by her parents, she suffered a multitude of offenses. The few about which I've heard have caused me amazement that she's alive at all.

But alive she is. As an emotionally wrecked adult, Grace was brought by the Lord into a community of Christians, many of whom didn't know how to respond to her. But God brought a few special women alongside her. Gradually, slowly, and steadily, they offered her the love, patience, and nurturing she had been so long denied. They were, in effect, mothers to this grown and devastated orphan.

Over the past several years, the wisdom, timing, and compassion of God has become evident in Grace's life as she has responded, step by step, to the spiritual mothering extended to her. And now she, in turn, is leading an inner-city ministry that reaches out to neglected and hurting teens.

This week, encourage your group to talk about those who have been spiritual parents to them.

- Who led you to the Lord?
- Who was a "Paul" to your "Timothy"?
- What is your "spiritual legacy"?
- How can you "honor your father and mother" and obey commandment # 5?

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in

their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. (Acts 2:46).