

THE LAST AND FINAL WORD

It is one-thirty in the morning as I sit at my computer composing the last lines of this eight-year writing project. With the pressure of the actual birth pending, I fear letting go. Is it finished? Have I been understood in what has been said? Does the reader feel liberated or loaded down?

My heart reaches out to you. How I wish that you and I could sit down and talk together. I want you to know that I understand if you are feeling uprooted, insecure. This is exactly how I felt when I first became aware of these principles--they seemed so new, so difficult, yet so right. It was hard to realize that there was no escaping Mollie--that I could not mother our children without first mothering myself; it was so much easier just to tell them what to do--so much easier to direct them than to direct myself. The road ahead seemed too steep, too hard: to overcome ingrained habits of hypocrisy--to overcome the dutiful-mother stance--to strengthen my children's right of conscience--to remember that my children are eternal spirits--to realize my need for the Spirit in gaining love and guidance--to establish justice in the home through written law and organization.

In time, I took courage in the realization that the understanding of these principles was the first step in their application, but that the application was not a destination--rather a life-long process. I found comfort in my conviction that I was not alone, that false traditions could be overcome in the same way weaknesses are overcome, through the power of Christ. I found hope and faith in the idea that the greatest single thing I could do for my children was simply be happy.

This then is my wish for you, my friend, that you will shut the world out and snuggle into your family and delight in living and loving together; and keep reminding yourself--there are no perfect parents,

perfect children, or perfect families. Children, like all of us who are normal, are sometimes congenial, sometimes withdrawn; sometimes thoughtful, sometimes thoughtless; sometimes rational, sometimes irrational; sometimes strong, sometimes weak. This is the ebb and flow of life, the sweet with the bitter, the good with the bad. No one is exempt unless they have forfeited their identity and integrity for artificial and contrived cloning--or shall we say clowning the picture of perfection. This is life; don't fight it, just accept it. When the milk gets split remember it's only milk. When the house slowly disintegrates before your eyes remember that one day you'll treasure the tiny fingerprints on the walls. When the toddler decides to throw a tantrum in the middle of grocery shopping, and everyone stares as if to say, "What? Is this a case of child abuse before my very eyes?" Smile! Then say, "Isn't he something? Just like his father!"

When the school psychologist calls to say your child's insecurity and shyness will require special counseling sessions, don't despair; next year she will likely call to inform you that your child's aggressive behavior will require special counseling sessions!

What greater honor can be given to you than to be able to produce little ones who are created in your own image--with two cowlicks like yours, with funny toes like yours, with a shyness like yours! Little ones who adore you--the center of their lives, their security! Love them! Glory in them! If there is any possibility of heaven upon this earth, it is in the family. So, once again, snuggle into your family and delight in living and loving together. Fight the powers that would tear you apart, and reach high for a More Perfect Union through "just and holy principles."