

Dear Editors:

Having read Mr. Frame's article, "Growing Criticism," (CT February 9, 1998), I am taken aback not only the lack of clarity and reason with which the article was written, but also with the obvious attempt to legitimize a personal attack by Grace Community Church upon the Ezzos into a "child development" (your term) controversy.

At best, this article makes no serious effort to report on any of the aspects the Preparation for Parenting materials and the opposition to same. At worst, the article is a smear campaign against the Ezzos. Tragically, the parents who read the "Growing Criticism" article have been denied the opportunity to make an informed decision. The only conclusion to be drawn from the article is some hazy, vague notion that something about the Ezzos is "bad," because there is "Growing Criticism."

A few illustrative points:

1. The fourth paragraph of the article makes the statement that "critics maintain generally that the Ezzos advocate a style of parenting that overemphasizes control and discipline at the expense of parental intuition and compassion." In addition to a complete lack of specificity, how does the premise support the purported issue of the article, which is the criticism of demand vs. scheduled feeding?
2. The fifth paragraph criticizes the lack of documentation to a Web site (of all things), yet fails to acknowledge the documentation set forth in the printed materials, which, by Mr. Frame's own admission, are in fact the center of the purported controversy. In other words, no one is criticizing the Web site, but the lack of documentation on the Web is being used to support a criticism of the printed materials.
3. The subject matter of Ms. Coleen Weeks' quotation is in brackets, signifying that the statement is unattributed. Less informed readers would believe that Ms Weeks' quote is direct criticism. Such sloppy reporting smacks of a smear campaign against the Ezzos.
4. Under the sub-heading, "God's Only Parenting Plan", commentary by Mr. Phil R. Johnson regarding Mr. Ezzo's character is placed after Mr. Nesper's comments regarding the dispute over scheduled feeding. Questions regarding Mr. Ezzo's character detract from the issue which the article purports to discuss. Any discussion of this supposedly legitimate "controversy" need not add detracting commentary. It is slander for Mr. Johnson to say it and libel for CT to print it. If Mr. Ezzo were more vindictive or less of a Christian he would probably sue.

5. The commentary by marriage and family counselor Ms. Barbara Francis is obviously out of context: infants don't "have a sense of self," any more than a two or three-year-old has a need to breast feed. The issue of demand vs. scheduled feeding (if indeed that was the purpose of the article) has no applicability to toddlers. Preparation for Parenting deals with infants, not with toddlers.

6. Mr. Frame obviously made little or no attempt to understand any portion of the controversy, and the comment that GFI failed to respond to any written questions "beyond referring to its Web site" indicates that Mr. Frame sent some e-mail and took no further action. The intent of the last statement in the article is obviously to create the inference that GFI chose not to discuss the matter, when in reality, Mr. Frame did not follow up on his inquiries.

It is most distressing to see the most yellow form of journalism in a supposedly "christian" magazine. What is worse, however, is that your magazine has lowered itself to the same standard as the secular tabloids. Failure to accurately discuss, investigate and accurately report on this issue will result in the turning away persons who might otherwise have received some benefit from the GFI programs.

I would never assert that a GFI program should not be held to a high standard or be free from close scrutiny. Nor would I ever assert that a GFI program is free from error. However, in order for any GFI program to be corrected or improved upon, if necessary, the criticism must be fair, and the scrutiny accurate. Mr. Frame, his editors and your publication have failed in this regard, and have brought discredit upon your integrity and reliability as an organization.

Very Truly Yours,

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