

May 7, 1996

Richard Encinias, Associate Pastor  
Calvary Chapel  
4001 Osuna Rd. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Dear Pastor Encinias:

I am writing to you regarding the Growing Kids God's Way parenting curriculum and classes, sponsored by Calvary Chapel.

My husband and I have had several friends go through this parenting class and, most recently, hoping to become parents ourselves through adoption, watched some of the videos and looked through the manual.

To be honest, we were appalled at the teachings of the Ezzos. They claim a biblical foundation for their teachings and use exactly the right phrases and words to support that claim. Interspersed with that language, however, are their "teachings" about raising children which, in fact, have no biblical basis.

Advocating rigid feeding and sleeping schedules in the first few months of life seems to me a glaring contradiction to what the bible teaches -- is letting your child "cry it out" all by himself within the early months of his life truly a Godly way of parenting? Would Jesus really leave a baby to wonder if anyone hears his cries? Would He consider it acceptable for a child to conclude that he must comfort himself because his very own parents will not?

The Ezzos also discourage (perhaps forbid) discussion of their principals during classes as well as outside. Even Jesus calls us to test all things against His word. Are the Ezzos' teachings so reliable that they do not need the same scrutiny? Their approach tells people that Growing Kids God's Way is the only biblical way to parent -- it discourages the use of intuition in child-rearing and encourages a parenting-by-number approach.

After reviewing the training materials myself, I did some research and found that other well-known and highly respected Christians and Christian organizations -- William Sears, MD, and Focus on the Family -- have serious doubts and concerns about the Ezzos' program. I've enclosed an article from *Christianity Today* as well as another review of Growing Kids God's Way.

Although not yet a parent, I viewed the Ezzos' Preparation for Parenting materials at the recommended time -- prior to actually having a child. I can go no further with their instruction. Every intuition and gut feeling I have about motherhood and my relationship to and responsibility for my child cry out against their parent-centered and selfish approach to child rearing. What is parenting, if not child-centered? The Ezzos, unfortunately, present child-centered as child-spoiling. Does a little child who knows that he is loved and is absolutely, 100% cared for qualify as a spoiled child?

Growing Kids God's Way is, at a minimum, a misnomer and, at its most expansive application, a disservice to parents, certainly, but, most importantly, to the little children. Its teachings, in the name of God, are provenly controversial and need to be examined in that light.

I am very interested in knowing Calvary's opinions about this curriculum and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

Thank you.

Regards,

Kathryn Kuhlmann