

Our home was a consistent home. A Christian atmosphere prevailed at all times.

Thanks were always given at the table by either the parents or the children. No one ever thought of eating until prayer had been offered. We were taught to pray before crawling into bed and always knelt to pray, even though we slept four in a room. My father read the Bible and prayed with Mother every night after we were in bed as youngsters and often with us when older. The standards of the home were Christian and no deviation was allowed.

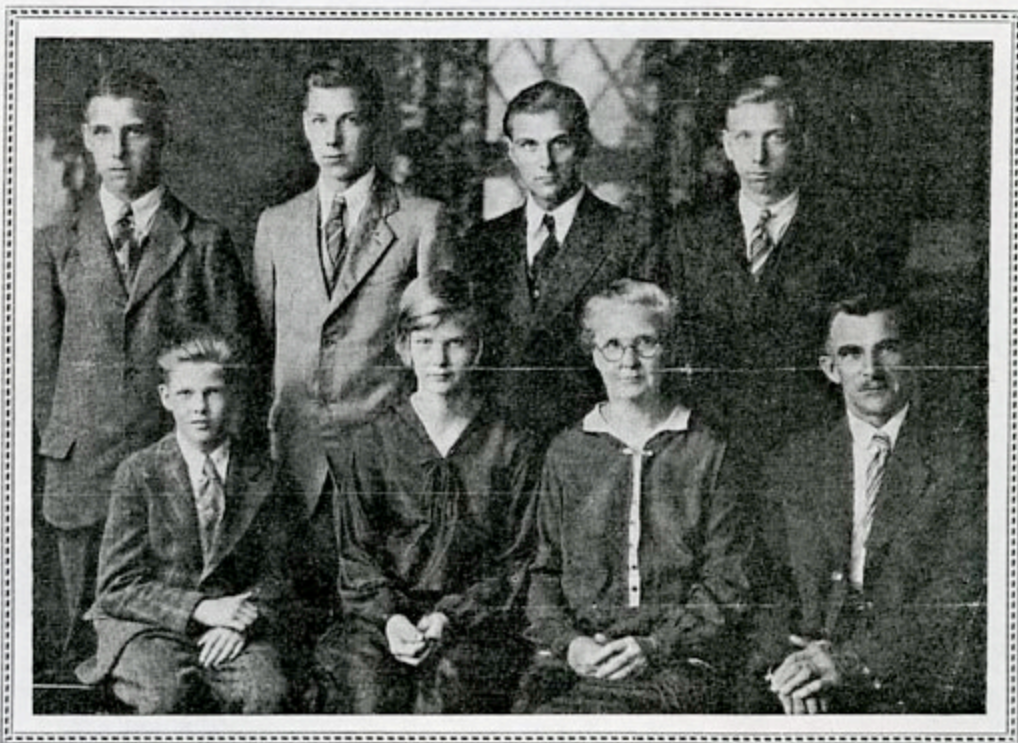
Our home was a disciplined home. We respected our parents and all other adults. No back-talk was allowed or tolerated. Although Father operated one of the largest farms and dairies in the county we always had time for what was important and nothing was more important than church attendance. We were always early for services. The rod was not spared but was used sparingly unless needed and then there was no recourse. We were given lots of freedom once we were in our middle teens. We were trusted and committed to God's keeping.

Our home was a hard-working home. Everyone had his duties. The older boys worked with Dad doing chores, each milking an average of ten cows each morning and night. We also helped with housework, scrubbing floors, washing dishes and helping with the laundry. Field work took long hours during the spring and summer and often in the fall. There was little time for play.

Our home was a church- and Christ-centered home. Whenever there was a service at the church we all went without question. That meant Sunday school, morning and evening services and prayer meeting. When there were special meetings we all went every night to our own church or other churches or tent meetings. The greatest joy of both Mother and Father

was to hear of someone who was converted. Their earnest prayers, yes, their agonizing prayers, were for the conversion of the lost and their children in particular. We were literally prayed into the family of God. We were all prayed into the service of God from birth. Four of us entered into full-time ministry and the other two practically so. Dad was Sunday school superintendent, church chairman and deacon for years. Mother was organist and Sunday school teacher as long as I can remember, and also the self-appointed visitor to the aged and ill. She was mother of the church.

Our home was together always. We did everything as a family. Dad would turn down invitations to relatives if the children weren't invited. Our parents lived for the children. Dad moved to a farm to get his boys off the streets and away from temptation and time



The Emil F. Swanson family, Sycamore, Ill., in 1928. They attended Calvary Baptist Church, Sycamore, now Bethany Baptist Church, DeKalb. (Front, l.-r.): Rev. Robert Swanson, pastor of Rothsay (Minn.) Baptist Church; Mrs. Willard (Rose) Clawson, Bethel, Wash.; Mrs. and Mr. Emil Swanson. (Back): Rev. Everett F. Swanson, pastor of two Conference churches before entering evangelistic ministry and

founding COMPASSION, deceased 1965; Rev. Lawrence F. Swanson; Leslie E. Swanson, Crystal Lake, Ill.; J. Ray Swanson, 16 years with Moody Institute of Science, deceased 1963. Of the many grandchildren, one is a pastor, one a missionary nurse, one a pastor's wife, and four are in seminary or Bible school or medical school, studying for Christian service.

for mischief. We were very close to each other and this has continued without a ripple of dissent to this day. All of us owe more to our parents than any other influence for what we are in Christ.

You know, John, I never thought of all this before and am blessed by reminding myself of my heritage. I hope we have passed on some of this to you and to others.

—Lawrence F. Swanson