



Friendship Quilt: A Treasured Heirloom Keepsake

By Deborah Tukua

During this time of year we often like to make craft projects or sew quilts, etc. for the home. On a cold day, it is very inviting to curl up with a thick quilt in your lap. I have a goal that one day all the quilts on our family's beds will be homemade quilts. About a year ago, a lady who lives plain moved to another state. Before her move she sold off many things to lighten the load of moving. She made her living making quilts. I regret to this day passing the opportunity of purchasing about half a dozen quilt tops that she had meticulously made. I was trying to be frugal at the time. The quilt tops went to a dealer who looked upon them as mere items to turn into cash.

I am not a seamstress, but I do like to make things. Here is an idea for a quilt that will be a treasured keepsake for a lifetime. I call it a Friendship Quilt. I am in the process of making one at the present and look forward to seeing it all together this winter and hung on my living room wall. I have asked my close friends current and past to make a 12" quilt square for me in blues and white as that is my color scheme.

They can make whatever type of quilt square they prefer: appliqued, pieced, crazy quilt. For those friends that don't quilt, they could sew lacy dollies onto the square or other trinkets or memorabilia that has significance to our friendship. I requested that the squares be mailed or given to me in one month's time. That way I can have them all come in about the same time.

Then I will lay them out and determine the best arrangement. Also, I will write or embroider the name of each individual on her quilt square, so as the years come and go our family will remember those that participated in this quilt project. And don't forget deceased loved ones. Make a square in her honor and write her name on it. Reserve a square to write the names of dear ladies that served as an encouragement to you even if you aren't in contact with them any longer. Remember that special teacher, neighbor, aunt, etc. The quilt will become a history of your life and a record of the dear people that made it special. The squares will be pieced together once received to form the quilt top and then joined to a layer of batting and backing fabric. To help the squares coordinate attractively into a wall hanging you can make uniform squares to be used between those from your family members and friends. Lastly, it will be quilted.

For extra fun and fellowship, schedule a quilting at your home and invite your friends. You can also offer to exchange squares with your friends so they can also have a friendship quilt to enjoy and appreciate for years. Hope you can find the time to construct a quilt of friends to encourage you through the years as a remembrance.

Making *NOT BACK TO SCHOOL* Special

Ideas for busy Homeschool moms who want their children to have
precious memories of that first day back to "Homeschool"

By Susan Dahlem

I know I am not alone in having fond school days memories. I talk to many of my friends who say the same thing I do - I LOVED school and only wish my children had had the same opportunity to have those school memories as I do. But, sadly those days are gone. Growing up I lived on the same block as my elementary school- the school at one end of the block and my house on the other. I walked school everyday - even those wonderful rainy days when I got to wear my yellow raincoat and red galoshes! Some of my most vivid memories are of "first days"...I loved everything about my school...the smell of chalk and pine sol, new crayons, that great fibrous paper we learned to make our letters on, the smell of "school rolls" baking in the cafeteria every day, the wonderful aroma of good old fashioned school paste-which a little boy named Michael actually found quite tasty! Did anyone else have a paste eater in their first grade class? I am one of those Homeschool moms who had wonderful school experiences yet, realized how much the times had changed and felt it necessary to do what was best for my children ad that meant paying the price of not having the fond memories of elementary school that I have. So in order to make memories that hopefully my children will cherish, there are a few things we do to "play school".

Pictures!!

The first day of "classes" each child stands in front of the blackboard with the name of our school and the date written at the top, and has his or her picture taken...in our school t-shirts. Then all the "scholars" stand together for our group photo. These pictures go in our School Scrapbook along with pictures taken throughout the year. Here is a picture of Ben in a Dahlem Academy T-shirt. It has our family crest and the Latin words: Literati - Scholasticism - Intelligentsia. This gives us some sense of identity in the community and has opened many conversations about homeschooling when people ask about the t-shirts.

Breakfast!!

Another little thing we do the first day of school is a special breakfast. I set the table the night before with the good china - complete with tea cups and saucers. We eat apple something -either muffins, pancakes or apple crisp (look for the recipes below) simply because of the longstanding apple/school relationship. We serve warm apple cider or Earl Gray Tea in my cup. In front of each child's plate is a "back to school" box...you know the \$1 pencil boxes you can buy on any back to school display. It is filled with new pencils (the personalized ones are wonderful), markers, erasers, bookmarks, little notebook, flash cards, personalized rubber stamps, stickers, scissors, glue...whatever will fit in side. Then it is wrapped like a gift - of course we use "school" wrapping paper (check your local Paper Shack, Michael's or other craft store), and in the bow is tied a pencil or ruler, stencil or other school-y thing.

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Shopping for these little back to school boxes relieves a little of my “school supply syndrome” - I adore school supplies!

Now to make this first morning a little less hectic I have include a couple of recipes - Apple Theme - to prepare ahead, freeze and quickly thaw in the microwave or oven. I hope you enjoy your first day “Back to Homeschool” as much as we always do!

Apple Muffins...

2 cups flour
4 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
2 TBSP melted butter
1 cup milk
1 egg slightly beaten
1 cup peeled diced apple (dried apple chunks are great!)
sugar and cinnamon

Sift dry ingredients together. Combine butter, milk, eggs and diced apple. Stir into flour mixture until flour is just dampened. Spoon into greased or cupcake cup lined muffin tin, dividing into 12 equal amounts making compartments of tin about 1/2 full. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes. Makes 12 muffins.

NOTE: Look at your local craft or party store for cupcake liners with a school theme. These muffins can be made ahead, baked, frozen and warmed in the microwave!

Apple Crisp...

2 cups sliced apples
3/4 cup sugar
2 TBSP flour

Mix apples, sugar and flour together and put in a greased 9” square pan. Mix:

1/4 cup oatmeal (uncooked)
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup flour

until crumbly and spread over apples. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

NOTE: You can make this crisp ahead, don’t bake, cover with heavy duty foil, freeze and bake frozen the morning you want to serve it...just add a few minutes to your baking time...

DELICIOUS!!!

Scheduling Our Days to the Honor and Glory of God

By Michele Autry

“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

I Corinthians 14: 40

In our early years of homeschooling, there were many acquaintances who were concerned with how we could do all that was required to home educate our child coupled with maintaining a home. After reading many good books, we were encouraged by articles that said it really doesn't take all day.

We were perhaps too reassuring in those early years to apprehensive grandparents and others in just how easy it was. I realize we did ourselves a great disservice to say these things. I made it sound easy. I made it sound like "anyone could do it." I did not confess how hard it really was. I did not tell how difficult it was to teach a new grade each year. I did not share with the onlookers the difficulty in researching and choosing curricula. I did not share how hard it was to stay on top of things.

At first, I seemed to have more time for play. But as the children grew...and my husband's work schedule became more demanding...and we moved onto our own property, I realized I had a great need for time management aids to be implemented in my life.

I come from a long line of public school teachers. I remember my Dad always having "*Teacher Planning Week*" and "*Teacher Work Days*." I soon realized that unless I scheduled them, there would be no planning days for me. After a hard morning of homeschooling, lunch was still up to me. There was no maid cleaning while I taught academics. In fact, there was a little "mess-up machine" marching about the house. The regular chores still awaited me.

Motherhood...A FULL-TIME Career!

We all know that Motherhood is a full-time career. Most Moms at home are Wives, Lovers, Nurturers, Disciplinarians, Maids, Milk Production Specialists, Spiritual Guides, Financial Advisors, Money Managers, Accountants, File Clerks, Inventory Specialists, Family Historians, Repair Women, Managers, Chauffeurs, Nutritionist's, Nurses, Secretaries, Efficiency Organizers, Counselors, Sisters, Daughters, Church Members and Friends. And if that is not enough to keep someone busy, the Homeschooling Mom adds to this list, Teacher, Curriculum Specialist, Musical Instructor, Librarian and Research Analyst. The last five are highly regarded full-time careers in our society. Is it any wonder that we get behind in many things? What can we do to keep ourselves from burning out?

All around me I saw friends struggling as I was. They were adding extra children to their homes, suffering with morning sickness, combating fatigue and physical illnesses, nursing babies and dealing with toddler woes while still home educating their older children. Do not let the tempter fool you into thinking you are the only one who can not "*get it all done*." We all are struggling in this together. We are not alone in this journey called homeschooling. But, we all must guard ourselves against comparisons.

Why should we think our lives should be like so and so's? Remember, she is not married to our husbands. She does not have our children. She does not have our weaknesses, because she has her own.

Though we are traveling a similar journey we can not measure our trials with others. Whatever burdens have been allowed into our lives is by the hand of a Sovereign Lord. Who are we to say to the Potter "**why hast thou made me thus?**" Whatever we are struggling with, someone else has struggled with it. It may not be our dearest friend's struggle. The wisest man ever born said in Eccl. 1:9-10, "**The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.**"

Before the Mercy Seat in Prayer

First and foremost, we must all go before the Mercy Seat each day begging for the Lord's hand to guide our day and our steps that we might honor him in all that we do. Plead for wisdom to see the obstacles as they arise. Ask for discernment over what the real "needs" of the household are for each day. Be willing to lay down any "list" to love, train, nurture and admonish your children. Pray that the Lord will help you be content in whatsoever state you may find yourself. Whatever obstacles get in your way each day, remember the Lord has allowed them into your day for some purpose in drawing you closer to him. Pray without ceasing lest you become weary in well doing.

The following are some suggestions that have been useful to me and friends of mine in ordering our days and scheduling our lives. I am still struggling in many areas of my life, but I hope this is a benefit to you.

Scheduling Your School-Year

Curricula/Conferences

- ✕ Keep a box for storing all the curricula catalogs as they come into your home.
 - *Keep this box somewhere that you will dog ear or circle items of interest.
 - *Keep a running list of curricula that interest you.
- ✕ Prior to a Homeschool Conference type up a list of things you want to evaluate along with the best advertised price. This will help you know if you have found a deal or not.
- ✕ Buy a book bag on wheels to take to the conference. Your body will thank you.
- ✕ Bring some of those free address labels that we get throughout the year to the conference. They will save your time at vendors whom you want to be on their mailing list .
- ✕ After you have purchased each year's curricula talk to your husband about getting a day time baby-sitter or scheduling a time with him that you can be alone and evaluate how you will schedule your school year. I need more than one full day for this. If you can not get any help, choose an hour each day that you will set for this task to get done and work at it until you feel prepared.

Making Your School Schedule Work For You

- ✕ For each child, make a list of how frequently each subject needs to be taught. i.e.. Math- 10 minutes for the lesson, 20 minutes for problems, 10 minutes for review = (40 minutes Math); History - 20 minutes for silent reading, 10-15 minutes for listening to narration. (35 minutes for History).
 - ✕ Ask yourself what subjects among your children could be shared at different levels.
 - ✕ Consider having a morning snack scheduled into the day. It helps with the child's crankiness and brain-power. This may allow you to schedule a later lunch.
 - ✕ Using a weekly assignment sheet makes a huge difference. This helps the child to know what is expected of him/her. When you are busy, the child can move on and complete other assignments
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instead of waiting on your answer or assistance. This also gives the child the opportunity to work ahead and be rewarded for diligence. If a child's work is unsatisfactory or they "dawdle", it only delays or forfeits their play time.

- ✘ Categorize each child's subjects into Independent (not needing mom) or Dependent (time with mom) time. Assign each child his/her "Mom Time." When it is not their "Mom Time," it is their Independent Time to complete their studies diligently and in the order they prefer.
- ✘ Every Homeschool Mom has a subject she dreads to teach. It usually is the one that you may be willing to say, "We'll do that tomorrow." Schedule those subjects or events during a time you are most energetic. Do not save it for last or when you get around to it. We all know in the end, we do not get around to it.
- ✘ Try not to be legalistic about when subjects must be taught. How would you like to do Math everyday at 9:00 for the rest of your life? Charlotte Mason strove for variety to keep the interest alive in the children. Yes, Math has to occur a certain number of times each week, but consider changing the hour of the day.
- ✘ Experiment with different school schedules, i.e.. 6 weeks on 1 week off, 3 weeks on 1 week off, no academics once a week, have only fine arts and field trips on that day.
- ✘ Decide how often you need time off from teaching. These days can be used for home projects, visiting, resting, planning and general catch up.
- ✘ Look at what is unique about your family. Your husband's work schedule may help determine the hours you school. Your children's extracurricular activities play a big part of your schedule.
- ✘ See if your library can be accessed via computer. This way you can locate needed books at home instead of struggling at the library with toddlers pulling at your dress.
- ✘ Make copies of "Recommended Reading Lists" that apply to what you are studying in History, Science and Geography. Highlight in different colors for each child the books that you would like that child to read on that subject. Bring it with you to the library throughout the year.
- ✘ Go ahead and make copies of the maps & worksheets needed for Geography and other subjects.
- ✘ Make a list of what things you would like for the toddler and pre-schoolers to be doing while you teach each subject to the older children. Pray that the Lord will help the child want to do them. This is a science in which I am still lacking the expertise.

Keep in Mind...

Remember, we are in a constant state of change. Our children are making new milestones each day. It should not surprise us that each schedule needs re-evaluating quarterly. Maybe you are not breast feeding anymore, the 2nd grader now reads independently, the baby is now walking, the toddler is needing one-on-one training time, the ten year old is becoming more of a help with the chores, the teenager is needing more time and direction. Each of these things is in constant change. Yes, we must maintain a schedule, but do not be surprised if last Fall's schedule won't work for this year. Schedule a "Teachers Work Day" at least quarterly to evaluate changes that need to be made.

Home & Yard Maintenance Scheduling

After you have scheduled your school time, now you need some time to plan how you will get the housework done over the next year. Make a list of what must be done weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. Decide what days of the week are laundry day, mending day, ironing day, errand day, phone calls day, paper work day, appointments day and grocery day. For the weekly items, have in mind what time of day you want to accomplish these things. Do not be so rigid with your well-formed schedule that you are unavailable for those providential opportunities to help someone who is in need. For those things that only need to be done monthly, quarterly and annually, chose the month you and your husband think

best to accomplish them. Those unexpected things *will* arise, so at least have a plan for the expected needs of the household.

Gardening is a big part of our lives. We like to do it as a family. As the manager of the home it helps to have a plan for when these things will fit in. When will you order your seeds, design your garden plan, plant the garden, prune the bushes, and plant the bulbs and seeds? Mark them on your calendar (in pencil) and be willing to be flexible.

Meal Planning

How many times have you stood in front of the fridge and said "*What will I cook tonight?*" You are tired and your culinary imagination is dead. What is a mom to do? Have a Meal Planning Day!! Part of your annual scheduling needs to include a Saturday alone with your cookbooks to plan wonderful, nutritious meals for the upcoming year! Consider scheduling a "Bulk Cooking Day" to put some casseroles in the freezer for those busy days that will come. I try to make a list of quickie meals and snack ideas. We also make big batches of pancakes and keep them in the freezer for more nutritious breakfasts that do not make a big mess right before we start school.

Plan to Be "*Open to Hospitality*"

We like to keep lists of people whom we would like to have in our home each year. When people come to stay in our home for several days I use a chart that plans the activities and the meals for that week. If you know someone needs a shower/event, prayerfully consider whether or not you should be the one to host it. If you do, remember to ask for help and delegate some of the food out.

Keep Your Calendar With You

My school year starts in August and ends in July. I sit down with my Planner in the summer and mark all the important dates of the year ahead. I mark birthdays, holidays, anniversaries and special events. I mark Music lesson days and recitals. I fill in special church meetings and singing schools. I note at the top of each calendar the months we intend to travel to see family. I also mark in Homeschool conferences. I try to always have my planner with me. I have heard other women call their planners their "brains." I bring mine with me to Dr. appointments and on errand days. I keep my personal Journal in my planner so I can make notes about the struggles throughout the year and how the Lord delivered me from them. I also keep weekly "to do" lists going. Each day as I look over the day ahead I mark down what must be done and what I would like to be done. Sometimes hindrances (focused child training, a needy friend, or a sick child) get in the way of my well planned days. But at least I thought about what needed to get done, now I only have to move that task to another day.

Planning, Implementation, Evaluation...Easy As PIE!

In Nursing School, we were trained to chart in the P.I.E. method. I still live by this method. First is Planning. Time spent in quality planning will benefit us in the year ahead. It is a time to set the goals that we have prayerfully considered. Second is Implementation. To actually do the things we think are best for our family is the hardest part. Only by the grace of God can we implement our plans successfully. Then, the final stage is Evaluation. At the end of each year we evaluate where we have been, where we are and where we are going.

Keepers of Our Homes...

We are attempting to form straight arrows (our children) to send into a crooked generation. We want to keep our focus. The reason we want to be good *"Keepers At Home"* is because it honors the Lord to do things decently and in order. It is more peaceful when we have a plan. We are to train our children, precept upon precept, how to be good managers of their homes so that their future struggles will be easier.

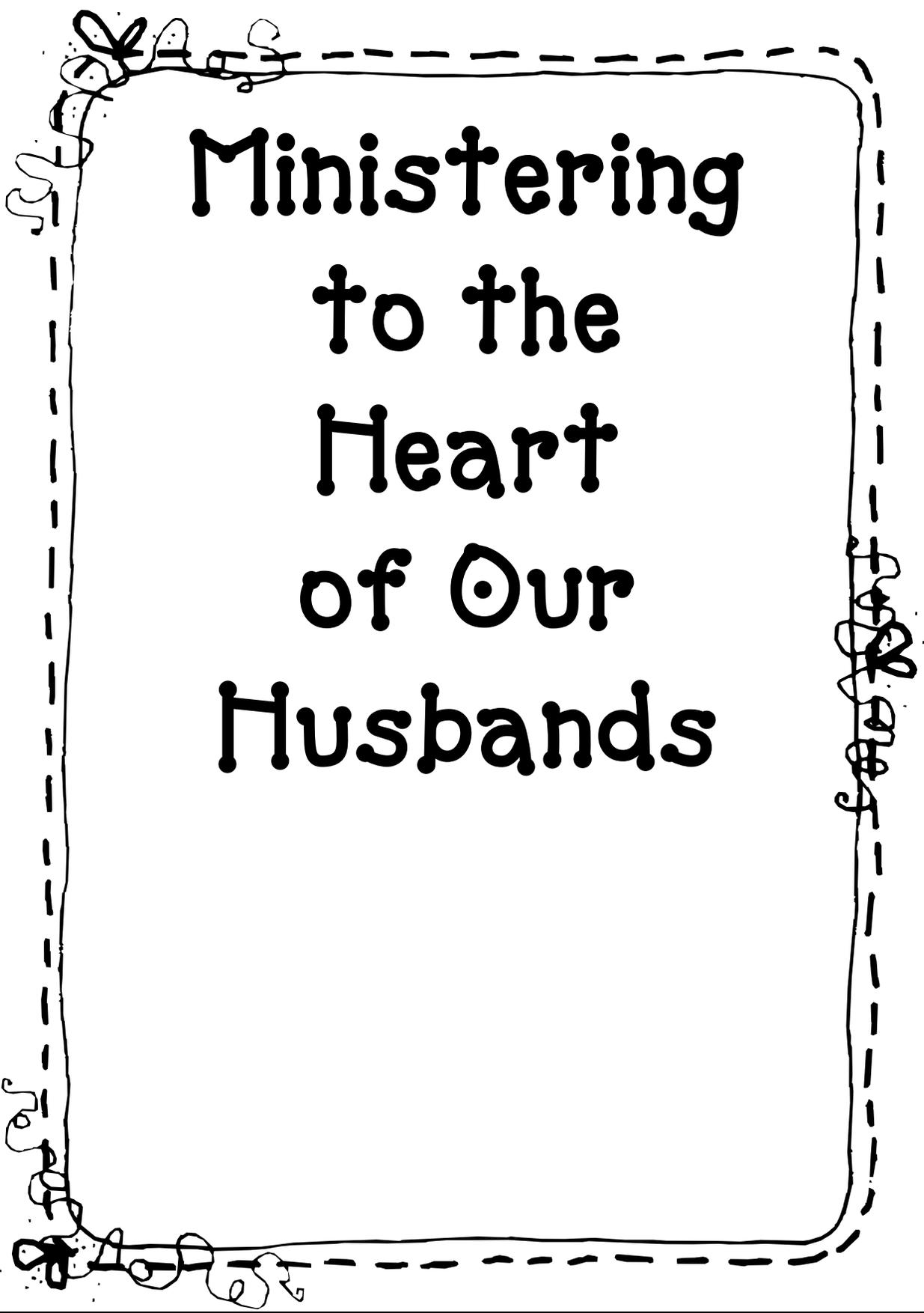
We also want to have time to make good memories for ourselves and our children during these short child-rearing years. When we are frazzled and overdone, it is very hard to be cheerful to our family much less focus on making good memories. We want our children to always see us looking upward to an All-caring Heavenly Father so they too will learn to trust Him during their future trials.

Enjoy the Blessings of EACH Season!

You can not be on top of everything all the time. Enjoy the blessings of each season of your life. During Summers, your focus may turn to yard and gardening. Maybe the house is a little more disorganized during the summer, but the freezer may be filling with fresh fruits and vegetables that you are putting away. In the Fall, you are intense in school and you have lovely leaves to press. December brings holiday activities and family gatherings. The cold months of Winter keep you inside and provide a good time to do home projects. The yard really does not need you in January. The Spring brings eagerness to be outdoors and renewed interest in nature studies and travel. It is also a great time to have fresh air school and not desk-work.

Enjoy the blessings of each season of life. Be willing to change those schedules accordingly as the new seasons present themselves. My prayer is that each of us will be not weary in well doing.

May the Lord richly bless you as you look well to the ways of your households, Michele Autry



**Ministering
to the
Heart
of Our
Husbands**

Cherishing Your Marriage

Excerpted from *The Real Life Homeschool Mom*

By Virginia Knowles

"Listen, you guys. You don't even know how good you've got it. You think you have problems. Right, well you haven't seen anything. Now my husband and I, we have problems. You've got each other, and you've got it good." This chastening could come from anyone who has a rough marriage.

It's true that we often take our marriages for granted. Those of us who have Christian homes don't always realize what a blessing it is to share mutual foundations and commitments. However, that doesn't mean our marriages are perfect! These folks don't always see what goes on in our houses. Almost any couple can keep their act together in public, but what happens when the edges of our sanity become frayed at home? What happens when we are tempted to settle for mediocrity? What happens when we let the guard down?

Homeschooling doesn't automatically immunize our marriages against conflict or even divorce. Even some home school leaders have marriages on the brink of disaster and some have already broken up. If you are home schooling to build family unity, you can expect to come under attack from Satan. He does not want husbands and wives to love each other or bear and raise godly children. He will do whatever he can to break us apart, even in subtle ways. If we think we stand firm, we had better watch out lest we fall! (1 Corinthians 10:12) A few facets of home schooling can even tend to make your marriage more vulnerable.

Danger #1...Unwise Devotion

Moms can be so devoted to home schooling and dads so consumed in their careers that they become apathetic to each other and shove the marriage relationship to the back burner. We think our mates will understand that we are too stressed out now for an intimate conversation or more. We think this will be temporary and that soon we will be "back on track," but it drags on and on. This leads to resentment, alienation, and loss of productivity. You will be worse than when you started, because now you need to take more time and emotional energy to restore the relationship and heal the hurts.

If your husband senses that the home school, hobbies or ministries are replacing him as the love of your life (after God), he will resist you in your efforts. If you place him as the rightful priority, he can be inspired to lift some of your burdens and energize you to accomplish even more! Carve out prime time for your marriage, even if it means laying aside other activities. A marriage relationship is for a lifetime, long beyond this short period of active motherhood. If you don't invest intensely in this intimate relationship, you may not have much in common when your children leave home.

Danger #2: Unceasing Association

Moms are at very close quarters with active, curious children all day. Dads face the unrelenting drain of office politics, meetings, and phone calls. After trying to be patient with other people all day, it is easy to get irritable in the evening. Moms, please don't get so "peopled out" that your husband, your precious partner, feels unwelcome in his own home. If you need a little buffer time in order to be civil, arrange to lie down alone in a dark room and relax for a few minutes before Dad comes home. Try to make his "home-coming" pleasant with a fresh appearance, a warm greeting, and a tidy house. Give him

a chance to take his shoes off and peek at the mail before he gets bombarded with the burdens of the day. Get the children to tidy up and practice their best behavior, too. We can learn to treat each other royally.

Many dads confess that they are rusty on their everyday child management skills since they aren't around as much. Weekends and vacations can be particularly tense for everyone as Dad shifts gears from office to home. Mom may feel like she is under scrutiny for every facet of child discipline. She may feel she is the resident expert on her children's personality and behavior quirks, so she resents Dad's "interference." At the same time, she wishes Dad would just take charge and fix those kids good! What's the solution? Mom needs to relinquish the reins to Dad while he is home, without abdicating her position as mother. Dad needs to spend that quality time enjoying and getting to know his children. Perhaps he can work out a bedtime bonding ritual of tooth brushing, stories, songs, and prayer. Meanwhile, Mom gets a little time alone, even if it is spent grading papers, nursing a baby, or reading a book.

Danger #3: Unguarded Sanctity

A third danger is that of letting your guard down, thinking your commitment to Christian marriage (implicit in our home school) will protect you from temptation. It is foolish to assume you will never feel like compromising the sanctity of your marriage vows. Any savored thoughts about "someone else" need to be taken captive to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Desires for extra-marital emotional intimacy can be just as devastating as sexual temptations. Be careful about your actions and appearance in the presence of others. Dress modestly and don't flirt.

Stay-at-home moms have the blessing of shelter from sexual harassment in rather heathen workplaces, but our husbands may still be exposed to it. Other men can put on the peer pressure with their jokes, pictures, and off-color comments. The women, through either naiveté or downright brazenness, may play at seduction with their wardrobe, gestures, and honeyed voices. It's a totally different mindset out there, sisters! While we don't need to be consumed with jealous suspicion, we do need to stand by our men.

Pray for your husband in his daily battle for integrity and purity. Make your presence known at his office with occasional visits or a family picture on his desk. Stay attractive for your husband and fulfill his physical and emotional needs within the sanctuary of your marriage so that he will be less tempted. Work at being a woman of gentle beauty from the inside out.

Danger #4: Unenduring Money

Finances can be a major stress on marriages. Most of us live on one income and some still have debts, which can easily cause heated conflict. Perhaps your husband thinks his hard work isn't appreciated, or worries that you will blow the meager budget on the home school. As the family grows or orthodontist bills loom on the horizon, he feels the increased pressure of financial responsibility. You might wish your husband understood the needs for quality curriculum, magazines, and workshops. Maybe you are tired of accounting for every penny and wish you had some money to spend on yourself. A ministry like Larry Burkett's Christian Financial Concepts can help, but you have to work at it and talk about it.

Let's talk about stretching your income. Stay involved with the family financial situation and be aware of the cash flow. Use a monthly budget, and review it together weekly. If credit cards are problem, yet you need the convenience of ordering by phone, use a debit card which takes money from your checking account. Set up some family rules to curtail spending. Some couples agree not to spend

more than a certain amount of money (like \$20) without checking with the other spouse, and to never spend more than another amount (say \$200) without a 48 hour waiting period, even if they are together. This latter rule can save you from buying overpriced encyclopedias or home remodeling from a salesman who will give you a "big discount" if you sign up before he leaves your living room. Many states also have a 3-day buyer's remorse law to release you from a hasty contract. Just think of all the purchases you have regretted, or other times when you waited and found out you didn't need an item after all.

Put your stewardship, diligence, wisdom, and creativity to work and do what you can to pinch those pennies. Grandma always said, *"Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without!"*

- ⇒ Avoid eating out or using expensive convenience foods very often.
- ⇒ Bring food and drinks with you in an insulated bag.
- ⇒ Cancel subscriptions which encourage a materialistic lifestyle.
- ⇒ Make your own gifts, greeting cards, decorations, and entertainment.
- ⇒ Cut your children's hair.
- ⇒ Learn how to repair clothing and household items.
- ⇒ To save on labor costs, ask friends to help with big projects.
- ⇒ Barter your skills.
- ⇒ Use garage sales and consignment stores to buy and sell.
- ⇒ Organize your home to avoid replacing lost items.
- ⇒ Borrow seldom used items.
- ⇒ Shop around! If you take your time, you can usually find the best deal.
- ⇒ Alert friends to your upcoming purchases so they can keep an eye out.
- ⇒ Choose items that are versatile enough for many purposes and seasons.

When you are planning your curriculum, try these money-saving strategies:

- ⇒ Shop carefully, concentrating on the basics first.
- ⇒ Borrow, trade, or buy used materials as appropriate.
- ⇒ Look for reusable or reproducible materials.
- ⇒ Try to see products or get personal recommendations before you buy them.
- ⇒ Consolidate mail orders to save on shipping charges.
- ⇒ Consider making some of your own teaching aids.
- ⇒ Use the public library!

What about making extra income? If you must work for pay (at home or elsewhere) you probably battle extra stress and fatigue. On the other hand, the stay-at-home mom may feel guilty that she isn't working for a second income to pay off debts or have extra money for fun stuff. She might feel pressured to start a home business on zilch time and energy.

Please let me warn you about taking any job - at home or away - which requires you to routinely shove your wife-Mommy-teacher-house duties aside to meet deadlines. Any job will divert a portion of your energies, so you may have to drop other activities. Balance is the key. I have had several years experience as an at-home working mom doing computer programming and bookkeeping for vastly different organizations: a Navy contractor, a church denomination, a mid-size company, and a few family businesses. I know now that it is imperative to avoid employers or clients who would try to compromise your integrity or usurp the authority of your husband.

Further, it is best to retain the right to either turn down work or fit it into your own schedule. It is unprofessional to accept a project for which you lack sufficient time or qualifications. Yes, part-time work can be worthwhile if your husband is supportive, you can still attend to your family duties, and the extra income allows you to make ends meet so you don't have to pursue a full-time career. On the other hand, it could be the straw that breaks the camel's back!

Lindsay O'Connor's book, *Working at Home*, offers valuable guidance on this issue. Money is an especially volatile issue when one spouse does something really stupid. Several times in the past few years, my husband and I have each made mistakes, which cost us big bucks. The first temptation is to fume and fuss at the guilty party, but then we remember that though we are all human and prone to error, God is still in control. Our marriage is too precious to hold grudges.

One year, a few days before Christmas, I was in a local warehouse store buying bulk foods. As usual, I was also drawn to the book aisle, where I ogled over the beautiful sale-priced *Kingfisher Children's Encyclopedia*. I really wanted to get it (who knows if it would be there the next time?) but my husband was upset that morning because I had already blown the budget for children's gifts and home school. I needed to honor my husband, so the purchase would have to wait. A few hours later, my neighbor Marie knocked on the door and handed me a wrapped Christmas present for the children. You know what it was!

The most important key to financial success is to be content and thankful with what God has already graciously provided, knowing that we are his stewards and channels of his blessings! For encouragement in this area, here is a small sample of Scriptures.

- ⇒ Deuteronomy 8:17, 18
- ⇒ Psalm 37:3-6, 16-19, 23-29
- ⇒ Psalm 145:13-16
- ⇒ Proverbs 10:3-5, 22
- ⇒ Proverbs 11:28
- ⇒ Matthew 6:19-34
- ⇒ 2 Corinthians 9:6-11
- ⇒ Philippians 4:11-13, 19-20
- ⇒ 1 Timothy 6:6-9, 17-19

Danger #5: Unrespected Worth

Finally comes the pivotal issue of respect. A homeschool mom can feel that her creative talents and nurturing care are unappreciated since they are hidden away amidst the drudgery of paperwork, laundry, dishes, and PBJ sandwiches. She wishes Dad would give her more credit for smart ideas and hard work instead of asking what she has done all day.

On the other side, many dads suffer disrespect of their masculine leadership. Thus they hesitate to offer direction to the family, especially in "mom's" areas: homemaking, mothering, teaching. Dad wants to be more than just a breadwinner, and what glory enters the home where he is honored by all. Mom wants to be more than "just a housewife," and what bliss in the family when her husband and children rise up and call her blessed!

A worthy wife works to develop a wholehearted respect for her husband (1 Peter 3 and Ephesians 5), gently encourages him in his efforts to lead the family as the God-ordained head of the home, and seeks

his advice on issues and decisions.

How does this apply to home schooling? Many moms consider the home school as their own private domain of expertise. Without intending to, they can easily shut Dad out of his leadership in this important area of family life. Moms sometimes jokingly refer to their husbands as the "principal" of the home school, but few actually treat him as that. Dad often has perspective to guide you through a sticky problem if you are willing to listen. Even if he doesn't seem as "spiritual" as you, don't ignore his counsel (see 1 Peter 3). He is responsible as leader of the family, so let him lead. Mike Farris, President of the Home School Legal Defense Association, wrote an excellent book, *The Homeschooling Father*, on Dad's crucial role. He emphasizes that fathers should take a major leadership role in the home school and outlines a course of action.

Possibilities abound for a dad's involvement in curriculum choice, lesson plans, schedules, and whatever else he is interested in. As you are trying to discern your child's learning style, ask your husband for his observations. If Dad objects to some facet of your curriculum, don't brush him off. Talk about it! If you are going to rearrange a room or the whole house to accommodate home schooling, seek his logistical input and his physical brawn. If he wants to tackle teaching math or science or history, let him! If he can take off time to chaperone field trips, glory be! Dad needs a sense of ownership in the home school. Don't nag him if he doesn't want to do anything, but he should at least feel welcome to participate when he is able.

Build Homes, Don't Throw Stones

To be safe from these dangers, we must learn to build our marriages rather than tearing them down. It may sound trite, but husbands and wives need to pray together, preferably every day. Nothing builds unity faster than centering our lives together around the Lord.

Is there some way that you and your husband can go out together for an evening or weekend without the children? Maybe you can swap childcare with another family on a regular basis. If that isn't possible, try a "date" at home after the children go to bed. Use some of your time to plan your schedule and budget or to sort through your family dynamics. If there is an unresolved issue that hinders your family's unity, ask God to help you find specific ways to break it down in love. Then follow through!

Clarifying your expectations for one another will also help build your marriage. What do you and your husband expect from each other and the children? Are your expectations reasonable and suited to your own situation? Have you communicated them clearly and tactfully and given them ample time? Put them in the hands of God, who is the only one perfectly able to meet our needs as husbands and wives.

Periodically ask your husband to be specific about what he wants from you. What is most important to him? This will vary from husband to husband. You can't please your own man by assuming he is just like your friend's husband. Ask your honey to make a list of things that he thinks are important for you or your family to do or be. Beside each item, ask him to mark "A" for very important, "B" for moderately important or "C" for less important. If something is vague, prompt him to add descriptive detail. When he says that he likes an attractive wife, is he talking about a calm spirit or a new hair-do? If he wants a clean house, does he want you to scrub nooks and crannies or just keep the clutter at bay? What kind of home school does he envision? For fellowship, does he want to have another family over for dinner every month or go to a midweek class at church? What kinds of food does he like? Give him the freedom to share his heart! To paraphrase Shakespeare, "How shall I love thee? Please list for me the ays!"

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Marriage is a priority, a privilege, and a prize. We need to protect it, nurture it, sanctify it, and commit it to God. A strong marriage is a legacy of love to our children and, in the Lord, is the foundation for building our family team. When children see Mom and Dad deeply in love, isn't this one of the most vital lessons they can learn in this school called home?

Fill Your Cup FULL of Romance!

50 Ways to Keep the Home Fires HOT!

Uh-ummm...For LADIES ONLY!

By Cindy Rushton

How are you doing in your marriage? I remember when we began homeschooling. For the first time in my life, I had finally found the fulfillment that God had planned for me from the foundations of the earth. The only problem was that I found myself either entirely too child-centered, talking about the children and homeschooling with every breath OR simply too exhausted from the pull on my time and energy as I balanced homeschooling, homemaking, and motherhood! I found myself in awe of this good-looking man I had forgotten along the way.

How are your home-fires? Are you finding that good-looking love-bug to be a stranger and you don't know where to begin romancing him? Want some fun ideas???

Here are 50 ideas that are SURE to make your (AND HIS) heart patter with that same passion from your honeymoon days! Have fun!

- ⇒ **Plan a daily Pow-wow time!** Whether it is coffee in the morning...coke over a mid-morning break...afternoon tea (coffee!)...or bedtime cuddles, set aside a time for the two of you to keep up with one another! Share your plans, dreams, vision, struggles, concerns, ideas. Get to REALLY know one another! Be sure that your children learn to respect this time. They will LOVE to watch their Mommy and Daddy as they deepen the romantic love for one another!
 - ⇒ **Turn OFF the phone!** Have a quiet day together!
 - ⇒ **Go for a walk in a stream!** Play in a waterfall...mud puddle...so on!
 - ⇒ **Go for a ride together!** Any of you Harley babes out there? Yes! We have a Harley! It was bought JUST for our love-life! It is the one thing that we do that means that we take time JUST for one another! What about you?? Is your RIDE a Harley? Sail-boat? Car? Convertible? Get out there for that TIME together!
 - ⇒ **Let the children prepare “tea” goodies for Daddy!** Let them serve the two of you as you cuddle together!
 - ⇒ **Plan a campfire!** Roast weiners...marshmallows...LAUGH!
 - ⇒ **Back Rub???** How about a surprise of a bag full of massage crème and goodies from Bath and Body Works? Give him a LONG back rub while he soaks up your attention!
 - ⇒ **Watch a movie...** Put the little ones to bed a little early and stay up to watch a movie (and SNUGGLE!) that he wants to see. Don't forget to light some candles...turn out the lights...and make a tray of HIS favorite goodies!
 - ⇒ **Watch the sunset together.** Don't talk!
 - ⇒ **Go for a picnic...** Yes! Pack a basket full of great food...grab a nice, thick quilt...and go to your favorite spot for a picnic. One of our favorite spots is on the Natchez Trace right by a gorgeous, bubbling spring. Where do you like to go? A waterfall? Park? Lakeside?
 - ⇒ **Write him a love letter!** Praise him for his manhood...acknowledge his protection...make a list of things you LOVE about him! Tuck it into his lunch...suitcase...or pillow!
 - ⇒ **Cuddle-Up** and give him a “Good-Ole-Head-Scratchin!”
 - ⇒ **Sit close** as you ride down the road!
 - ⇒ **Pray for him!** Pray God's Word for him. Don't forget to ask him for areas he NEEDS prayer!
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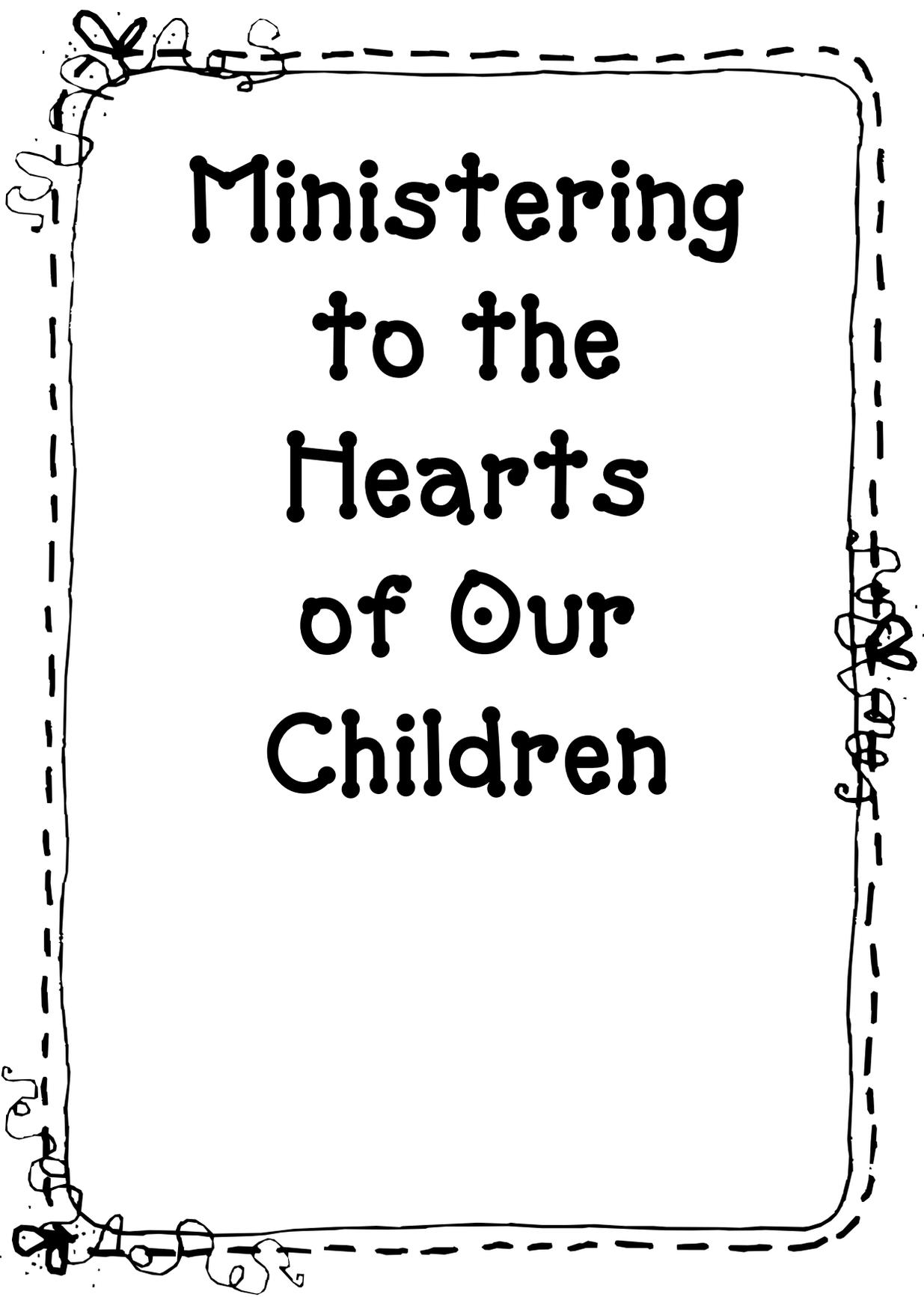
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- ⇒ **Share verses God gives you for him!** NOT in an argument! Instead, write him a note or a pretty card with the verse that God gives you for him. ENCOURAGE your man!
 - ⇒ **Clean out your room** and make it a special place for the two of you! Candles...Kenny G CD playing in the background...new quilts...fluffy warm covers...ice-water...fruit!
 - ⇒ **Plan a weekend** (or a day!) away with your husband! Do something HE loves to do!
 - ⇒ **Have breakfast on the deck!** OR just a cup of coffee! JUST listen to him!
 - ⇒ **Make a scrapbook JUST for him!** Try...a scrapbook about his job (“I love ME book”), a scrapbook about his life (include stories and letters from his loved ones!).
 - ⇒ **Make a special meal JUST for him.** Feed the children early. Let them watch a video while you two have a candle-light dinner!
 - ⇒ **Call your husband at work JUST to say, “I Love You!”**
 - ⇒ **Plan a date** just for the two of you!
 - ⇒ **Give him a good, hot bath!!** He does not have to be DEAD or OLD to be bathed!!!! Don’t forget to dry him off AND dress him! (IF you can!)
 - ⇒ **Go for a walk** (or jog) together!
 - ⇒ **Make a book of certificates** “Good For _____” Think of things that your husband would LOVE! Have fun!
 - ⇒ **Stop what you are doing** (cancel a week of your plans) to spend time with your husband. Just do what HE likes...sailing, ride the motorcycle, camp, get a hotel!
 - ⇒ **Change the sheets** and put on the bed WARM right before bed!
 - ⇒ **Go play goofy golf!**
 - ⇒ **Feed him grapes!** Invent creative, new ways to eat them!
 - ⇒ **Take a nap** so you can stay up late with your sweetheart. Go for a midnight walk!
 - ⇒ **Go parking!!** (In your own yard to be SURE you have privacy!!)
 - ⇒ **Make ice-cream!** His favorite flavor!
 - ⇒ **Get dressed** (EACH DAY!) nicely before he comes in from work! Let him KNOW you love our calling as a wife! Add a touch of his favorite perfume...his favorite hairstyle...and don’t forget his favorite SMILE!
 - ⇒ **Give him a great big hug!** Pat him on the bottom as he walks off!
 - ⇒ **Go to a local park and SWING!**
 - ⇒ **Have a coke together.** See who can tell the silliest joke!
 - ⇒ **Send a sexy ”page” to him.** If he does not have a pager, leave a sexy message on his answering machine on his cell-phone! OR send him a sexy email!
 - ⇒ **Schedule lunch together.** Talk about LIFE goals... problems... struggles... vision... delights!
 - ⇒ **Walk through the mall holding hands!**
 - ⇒ **Make hot chocolate and cuddle up together!** Don’t forget the classical music and cuddles. Maybe a cute nighty!
 - ⇒ **Take a family bike ride!**
 - ⇒ **Take a shower together!**
 - ⇒ **Enjoy the Fall together.** Ride the motorcycle and have a picnic along the way!
 - ⇒ **Send your husband a package to work.** Include a love note...edible undies... OHHHH! Be sure to note on the box CONFIDENTIAL: OPEN PRIVATELY! Imagine that smile on his face!
 - ⇒ **Stay in bed and TALK** instead of getting up and busy as usual!
 - ⇒ **Serve him breakfast in bed.** Complete with flowers, a special note, and of course, a smile on your face!
 - ⇒ **Go sailing OR riding at sunset.**
 - ⇒ **Play a game of tennis together!**
 - ⇒ **Take your ugliest nighty** (you KNOW...the one he hates the WORST!) or sweatshirt to the altar!
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Cut it off right below the arms...crawl into bed JUST under the covers with the top showing...watch his expression as he comes to bed and pulls back the covers for HIS surprise!!!! ☺ !!!!!!!!!!!!!

⇒ **REALLY enjoy your husband!** He is your best friend! He needs friendship as much as you do! Treasure each fleeting moment with him! AND have fun! ☺



**Ministering
to the
Hearts
of Our
Children**

How to Break Your Child's Heart in Ten EASY Steps!

By Cindy Rushton

Got your attention?

This is an excerpt from our new book AND workshop entitled *Ministering to the Heart of Your Child* (more details at the end of this newsletter on how you can order your copy!). Before I get into this chapter, I have to tell you about Elisabeth's reaction to this...it was PROBABLY much like yours as you turned this page!

One evening, I took Matthew and Elisabeth out to dinner. As we were dining, they wanted to hear about the ideas in my new book. Oh, it was one of those 'holy-moments' as my darling children poured forth their ideas to add into the pages of our book.

Not far from the end, Elisabeth excused herself to use the restroom (VERY typical of her!). While she was gone, I changed modes into this section of the book. As she came back, she had NO clue about my transition of modes from ministering to the heart of the child to breaking the heart of the child in ten EASY steps! She sat patiently listening...then had a horrified look on her face...finally after hearing a few points, she interrupted gently to say, "Momma, THAT would break the heart of a child! This is just unbiblical teaching! I cannot approve of this teaching!"

This is EXACTLY right! We as godly parents certainly don't want to break a child's heart, but these are the little and big ways, which children are shattered into pieces day by day! In the following points, maybe you can find those little snares that lead to the heart of rebellion so that you too may minister to the heart of your child!

ATTENTION: This is funny! In NO way is this intended to be based upon any REAL family that I KNOW OR that anyone could imagine knowing!

SPECIAL NOTE...The suggestions below are not intended to take the place of God's Word or leading. If you have a concern, please contact your husband or mental health professional for guidance. Again, Mom's do not TRY this at home without the CONSTANT supervision of a man with a straight jacket or hand-cuffs! These steps might just work...and we will not be held responsible!!!!

- ◆ **Assume that they are ONLY children...EVEN if they are fifty!** My goodness, how on earth can a mere child understand ANYTHING about life?? We all know that children are just going to make the exact same mistakes that we have made and we must protect them from those errors since we are their parents! Of course saying this, we all must realize that they are probably NOT going to listen to us (just like we did not listen to our parents!) or appreciate our gracious input into their lives (just like we have never truly appreciated our meddling parents!). The only difference is that we KNOW that they are only children...they do not have the abilities, understanding, or vision that we have since we are now older and more mature! Of course, that is because you know how those 'kids' are

these days!

- ◆ **Don't believe in them...** YOU know what I mean! Goodness, we are talking about Johnny here. You know what I mean, especially IF you have a Johnny in your home. Those children are the most undependable, forgetful, troublesome children there are. They are our 'special' children. We, being the godly parents that we are, KNOW that they are just going to disappoint us, so we have to work real hard on the others...Johnny is just a lost cause. Yes, lost cause! You know you cannot do anything with one of those wild children with no initiative...silly dreams...raging anger...constant forgetfulness...and of course, an excuse for everything! I say don't believe in them, but I have to note that you CAN believe that there is NOTHING on earth that you can trust little Johnny with...he is a lost cause. But of course, that is just Johnny...we all know that he is special!
- ◆ **Push them...**they NEED to develop godly character somehow! There are three really easy steps to help you as you try this technique. The first is to be sure that your children never miss those opportunities that you missed growing up...down to that EASY BAKE OVEN that your parents did not buy you because they thought you would make a mess (can you imagine?! Homeschooling gives you TIME to dig into ALL that your community and church offers. Surely they would not offer these wonderful activities if it were not God's will for us to do them, right? Taking full advantage of what is available might just help fill those holes that will unravel if you homeschool... after all, you are JUST a mother! A second tip is to push them just a little beyond what they THINK they can do! It will make them tough! That is what children need to be in the real world. That gentleness is for babies! The third tip actually branches off from the last point...stay on the go! Children just need to get over that whining! Keep them on the go...there are just too many excellent activities and good deeds that only WE can do!
- ◆ **Critique the little critters...**it will make them better! There is no greater way to make our children better than to constantly point out those things that they need to change...surely they will eventually get those habits down. You know...how they speak, their manners, their posture, their writing!!! YOU be picky! They only have ONE mother! If you are easy to please, what will they become??? Use more correction than affirmation, you only have just SO many years left. How will they know all that they need to know if you do not tell them?? Be attentive, there is a fault hidden in every little thing that they do!
- ◆ **Discipline them carefully...**You only have two choices! You will either be permissive or you will be harsh. It really does not matter which way you go. Kids are just kids...they will rebel anyway! But don't worry, God promises that when they are old, they won't depart from the life we live before them! They will treat OUR grandchildren with the same love and kindness that we treat them. Of course, this will be so engrained in them that they are not too likely know why they do what they are doing...prayerfully, they won't ask why!
- ◆ **Stay too busy for time with them OR to listen to them!** You only have just SO much time to live your life. Pursue your interests! Go for those opportunities that come your way! If you do not let God use YOU instead of your family, how on earth will you ever reach your dreams??? Also, because there is NO time for fun, be sure that you stick to your schedule so you can attain all of your life pursuits and responsibilities. The key to having life in the fullest is finding a Ministry...build it like a business and don't let ANYTHING or ANYONE distract you along the way! Oh, if this seems a little harsh for you, then by all means don't feel guilty as you put off a minute here and a minute there with your children...you will have time when they are grown to have time with them. Surely they will have their priorities in line so they will spend time with you then!
- ◆ **Toughen them up!** If there is one thing that no one can stand, it is one of those whiny little brats!

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The answer for those little twirps is a good dose of reality! Well, wouldn't you like to just slap a kid like that...especially in the face?? Oh, if that would leave a mark, surely words won't hurt! Stirness will bring compliance. Poking a little fun will teach them to take a joke! Calling them names won't hurt either...they need tough skin! If they are not toughened, we will find them later going around all over the place blaming US for the sin in their life. We all know that there is no reason for them to judge us! A little exaggeration or a little white lie is no problem and kids just need to get over it! Probably the biggest problem with children these days is that they are just a little pampered. Showing them that you mean business when you discipline them will teach them quickly who is boss! If they don't get it, then nag...scream...and slap them until they get it! Ohhh, before I leave this point, we need to remember that children do not need that pansy talk that these plastic Vacation Bible School teachers dish out! You can do more good in the life of a child if you tell it like it is... and show NO mercy!

- ◆ **Don't listen to them!** Doesn't it just make you soooo sick when a parent stops to listen to a little child? What do they know? If we are going to take time to listen to a child, the least we can do is constantly point out ways that they can say it better and we simply MUST critique what they are saying, because it is necessary that our children learn to say the right things at all times! This is all for their good. Children need to learn from an early age that we expect perfection AND when they are older, we will have more time to listen!
- ◆ **Don't worry about your witness!** The most important thing that you can do in life is show your children how to act in public. It is really no one's business what you do at home...especially not your child. There is just too much bondage in thinking about living like a holy-rolly! One day children are going to see that ALL families have a skeleton in their closet. They need to learn forgiveness and grace! They will get over your fake face to the world!
- ◆ **Don't let them KNOW you!** It is very important that you set your tone in your home. The parent who is a friend and companion to their child runs a risk of that child knowing too much about the parent and their life. You can RUIN a child that way! Instead why not live your life privately. Children do not need to see a parent who is passionate about ANYTHING...those parents are unduly shaping the life of their children to their own twisted beliefs! Children do not need to sit around under our feet trying to be just like us! They need to get out there in the real world and find their place...their job! The biggest problem associated with homeschooling is the great risk that children will be tuned into the emotions of the parents. God-forbid that the child be exposed to the grief, pain, sin, struggles that foolish parents so commonly expose homeschooled children to! THEY MIGHT GROW! Nothing is more annoying to the world than children that can carry on a conversation with adults...they need to stick to people their own age! If that is ot annoying, have you ever noticed those children that seem to glow? They seemingly absorb the joys, delights, strengths, power (in the Word and in prayer), heartbeat, and life-message of their parents! Shouldn't kids just be kids?? Parents do not need to impose their faith on the child or their children will one day resent their interfearence. Things need to be just like they have always been!

All right...I am now rolling on the floor laughing! This has been a fun (do I have a TERRIBLE sense of humor or what???) article to write. It is just *so* opposite of the direction that God is leading our hearts. In reading back over this article, I have felt pangs of deep pain for the many children who are broken each and every day.

My prayer is that you will step up to the great call of ministering to the heart of your child. There is no greater ministry! There is no greater call!

It is as we pour our WHOLE heart into ministering to the hearts of our children that we will find

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blessings beyond measure! May this be your heart beat! Have fun and ENJOY your treasures!

Ministering to the Heart of Your Child

This chapter is excerpted from our newest book. This book is for you wherever you are on the journey. Chapters include: Turning Our Hearts Back Home...Lord, Begin with Me...Would the PERFECT Mother Please Step Forward?Step-by-Step In the Spirit...The Battle is ON For The Heart of Your Child...Build Your Home...How To Break Your Child's Heart In 10 EASY Steps... Minister To Their Heart In Little and BIG Ways...Leading Little Ones To The Heavenly Father...Instilling a PASSION For God...Vision: That He May RUN...Inspiring Our Children Toward Greatness...Life and Death Are In The Tongue... The Incredible Power of Your Words...Strong-willed?? Strengthening The Will of Your Child...What About Teens...Must They Rebel OR Can We Continue Heart-To-Heart...Enjoy the Journey

Retail will be \$20. Mention that you heard about the book through this reprint book and you can get your copy for \$12.00 plus \$2.00 S/H (unless you order any other materials...then NO shipping charges!)

NEW!

Would the PERFECT Mother Please Step Forward???

By Cindy Rushton

Do you ever feel overwhelmed as you look at this awesome call of womanhood? Do you ever question your qualifications and abilities? Do you ever wonder how others get things to just work out fine while you are still struggling over the most mundane areas of life?

I have found myself right here more times than not! Face-down on the bathroom floor, complete with nasty scum!! Pouring out my limitations...my fears...my frustrations...my lack in character...my battle with the flesh...on and on! Confessing once again my greatest problem...stepping out to do things by myself, only to leave God somewhere back in the dust!

This feeling of despair is only compounded as I look to Scripture with its examples of hidden women of old. They seem so perfect...devoted to the call...steadfast through it all. I can not imagine any of them burdened, struggling, much less frequenting my quiet place!

Did They KNOW?

Do you think that they knew the power of motherhood? Do you think they ever felt that their calling was too great of a burden or did they just step up to the call with confidence and absolute perfection? Do you think they had any idea how great their children would one day be when they were in the midst of those temper tantrums and character building lessons or did they ever find themselves wanting to choke their little darlings?

Think about it...do you think that Eve had any idea of the fruit of her womb? She was the Mother of all living? Do you think she had a big enough vision to envision the heritage that was before her? Would it have made a difference in her choices when she faced temptation?

What about Jochebed? We know that she treasured her little Moses...but do you think that she had any idea that she was nursing the “deliverer” of her people? The one her people had asked of the Lord? Do you think she knew how powerful her calling as a mother would be as it affected the life of this young man?

How about Sarah? In those lonely, desperate years of infertility and waiting for the appointed time of promise, do you think that she had any idea that her little boy would be the first child of an entire nation? The mighty nation of Israel? The beginning of the lineage of Christ? A man known for centuries as a man of great faith? Do you think that she really believed that God could go beyond the impossible to the incredible?

What about Ruth...do you think that in the midst of her grief as she mourned the loss of her dear husband and kept a commitment to his family to stay and care for his mother come-what-may that she could fathom the plan of God? Do you think that she could have ever imagined that she would be chosen to continue to lineage of Christ?

How about Hannah? Do you think those childless days full of torment would have been easier if she
