

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

Don't do it! Nooooo, just joking! No, this is the time of year that will make or break our Homeschool. Nothing frustrates me more or distracts me more than a dirty home. (Could be the reason I am frustrated and distracted at times...hummm!) When Homeschooling, my home has utterly sent me into a flood of tears as I felt it pang me on the head for my attention when we would rather learn about volcanoes! With this dilemma, I arrived at the easiest plan I could come up with to balance homemaking with my busy life. Here it is for your consideration. It is definitely as close to **HOME-MAKING THE EASY WAY** as I think I can legitimately get!

First, use this time over the summer to *re-organize your home*. We usually take a couple of weeks off from lessons, life (I look so scummy that I DEFINITELY do not want a human to see me!), and the regular routine to clean out everything. We work from one room to the next until the whole house has had a complete overhaul. We pull out everything from every crook-and-cranny (An expression of my mom's...have no idea what that really means...we just DO it!). We get rid of the "unnecessaries" by throwing away or giving away. We put away all of those papers and books that have piled up over the last six months (We do a clean out twice a year, spring and fall!). We wash down the walls, windows, pretties around the house (I have a huge collection of tea cups, tea pots, linens, and other beloved pretties that need that tender-loving-care on a regular basis or they go funky!), and put away seasonal clothing. Usually we are so exhausted by the end of this clean up break that no one has the energy to mess up for several months! This tends to only require daily maintenance until the mess builds up again...usually about six months.

Take an honest inventory of your family life. Find a way to manage this homemaking monster so you can enjoy your family and your lessons. Need more help, check out the pros of homemaking like www.Flylady.com, Emilie Barnes, or Mary Carney. Also take a look at our **NEW *Make Your Own Brain-in-a-Binder Printables, Ultimate Mommy Menu Planner, and Let's Get Organized*** books.

Second, use this time to *re-organize your Homeschool*. Yep, I know that the time goes by way too fast. If we want to have the most efficient Homeschool, we need to plan ahead. Take this time to do your planning. Set up a "Mommy Journal" with a log of what God is teaching you (last section), your plans for the year, your supplies that you will need, your schedule (re-evaluate it in the light of your new year and all that will be going on in your home—extra-curricular activities, lessons, lifestyle changes—babies, traveling, care of your parents, job changes), even your recipes that will make each day a bit easier. Scope out the curriculum that you would like for the New Year. Of course, don't forget to include the fun stuff that we tend to put off. Plan that in. You will have a much better school year. Gather up your supplies. If you are on a

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

budget, the best way to bless your husband is to buy those supplies bit-by-bit, while they are on sale. Scope out the different things that you will need and buy them when they are on special. For example, we buy truckloads of 3-ring binders when Office Depot puts them on special for "Buy 7, get 5 free." That is one key to encouraging our young writers as we have plenty for them to use AND we have them on hand when they need them. Plus, it helps our family budget tremendously to save that money along the way.

Summer is also the perfect time to clean out and re-organize what you already have. We pull out our notebooks and supplies to re-organize and inevitably this sparks interest as the children finish those studies they forgot about or beg to do a lesson just to use the paints that we have (that are NEW again now that they are found!). It also helps us to take a look back over the things that we have learned over the past year. Oh, seize this time to re-organize. Gearing up will be a lot more fun and a whole lot easier!

Take This Time to Re-fuel!

Oh, the other areas are all fun, but this one is the MOST fun! This one is where YOU re-fuel and re-supply for the call. This article simply would not be complete without the most important aspect--taking care of the good soldier. That means taking care of YOU!

There is just something about a Homeschooling mother that makes everything else somewhat of a priority, yet this aspect seems to be the last thing on our list to do. Yet, if we are to be prepared for this call so we can gear up for the best year yet, we most certainly must re-fuel OUR tanks! However, the tricky part is that we are all so very different that what re-fills my tank would not work for you. So, think over what YOU like?

What do YOU enjoy? What fills YOUR cup? Feel the twisting of your stomach? Getting a knot in the back of your throat? Have you already put this article down 15 times at this part? Been scared of what this might just say? Well, let's think through this TOGETHER!

What fills your cup? Bible Study? If so, why not begin a new Bible Study JUST for you! The benefits are simply unbelievable! What about reading that book, magazine, or catalog that you have piled up? Oh! The joy! Maybe a leisurely afternoon (or BUNCH of afternoons) at the pool, park, or river is just "what the doctor" ordered to help fill your cup? Perhaps, just the thing needed to re-fill your tank is a day or weekend away at a retreat OR even better, buy the tapes and go for a long walk each

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

day as you work through them. This way your "retreat" can happen over and over again! Speaking of a long walk, why not take the time, beginning today, to carve out time for your favorite mode of exercise. Maybe you are like me, walking is the divine appointment with God and His wonderful creation. Or, maybe you will want to ride a bike... skate... play ball... go fishing... play laser tag (we LOVE this one!)... jog... go horseback riding... etc. Take the time today. It will be much, much easier to take that time on a regular basis.

Maybe you prefer a more sedentary life, I am sure you could tell that I do. I devour having a daily teatime or coffee break. I usually take that time to dig into the Word, or write that article that needs to come to life, or to read a great book JUST for me (actually that is an understatement, every book I read is really never JUST for me because I have to share them with my family and friends.). I also love to take that "down time" to Scrapbook or pow-wow with my husband, children or a good friend. You probably have your favorite way to re-fill and re-supply. Make a point today to take that time. Then, schedule regular times throughout the school year to pull apart to re-fuel.

Want to see a big difference in your Homeschool? Take time to re-fuel now and continue to refill all throughout the year. You will find that extra bit of energy. You will find that your time really is better balanced. You will stay fired up. It will be easier for you to stay on track. Plus, your children will learn even more than ever. Yes, they will be more inspired to learn as you continue learning and living as a mother.

So, don't put this one off. Take time to let God fill *your* cup. Take time to let your friends fill your cup. In fact, take time to fill your own cup. Then, oh, beloved, then you will be ready to pour forth from an overflowing cup!

Ready???

So, ready? The days are getting longer. The air is a bit (MUCH) warmer. You may feel tired and a bit weary right now. But, now is the perfect time to pull back for a bit of a retreat. It is time today to retreat, rest, renew, re-organize, and re-fuel.

I know, I know ALL; I mean ALL of the excuses. I have made them all myself. In turn, I have had too many times that I have been weary and worn. I have had too many times that we have gotten off track and it took a while, a long while (sad to say), to even realize that we had gotten off. I have had far too many times that my attitude and my spirit did not show my family that they were my true priority, much less how precious they are to my heart. I made the excuses. I did not take the time away to gear back up. Everything in life was completely affected.

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

On the other hand, there is something wonderful about starting a fresh new beginning. I guess because "new beginnings" are what God is all about. Each day we get a new beginning. Each week, we can confidently begin a whole new week. Even each month, we get a brand new month. Oh, and then we have a New Year every single year.

I need those new beginnings. I need a fresh start. I love those closed chapters to life...and the new chapters. This is the time to tidy up from the last year, and get ready for a brand new year. You are now cleared to land. Whether you are coming in for a temporary "landing" or you are just coming in for a little "touch-n-go," this is the perfect time to get ready so you can soar again.

So, are you ready for another big year? How about the summer of your life? Hey, take this summer to retreat...rest...renew...re-organize...and re-fuel. Oh, and in August, I have a little assignment for you. Why not write me an email (Better than an essay, huh?) just to let me know one thing? Write me a little note to let me know "What YOU did on YOUR Summer Vacation..."



*Excerpted from **Homeschooling The Easy Way Magazine**.
Companion tape and retreat tape set are ALSO available!
PLUS! See our **Make Your Own Brain-in-a-Binder** for a companion
for those planning moments!*

The Godly Home Business...



"The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs
in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame.
You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose
waters never fail."

Isaiah 58:11

The Story Behind Matthew's Cutting Edge

by Matthew Rushton



Hi, my name is Matthew Rushton. I am the owner of Matthew's Cutting Edge, we offer the sharpest knives at the best prices around.

Matthew's Cutting Edge began when I was three, at which time my grandfather gave me my very first pocket knife. I cherished it. I carried that old knife absolutely everywhere showing everyone I saw. I was so proud of that knife and the trust that I received with it. I am glad that my dad and mom trusted me at such a young age. They taught me that yes, the knife can hurt you, but if you take care of it by oiling it or sharpening it or not throwing it around, that same knife can take care of you by doing what you want for it to do.

The addiction (hobby is what some call it) had started to grow with my second knife, and third, and fourth, and fifth. It was every time I saw my grandfather or every time I had a birthday until this hobby grew to be inseparable with me and I had thirty or more knives. I cherished all of them for their own purpose, carrying half of them with me every day!

One day, I was out with my family visiting all of our favorite hideaways. The natural place to end up was at my favorite knife shop. The owner had become accustomed to my frequent stops and haggling for a good price on new treasures. This particular day, we were talking about knives when he encouraged me to start my own business. He said that as much as I loved pocket knives and studying all about them, I should just go into business and sell them myself rather than selling them for others to make the profit. He recommended that I begin a business selling what I loved the most. I had never thought about doing anything like that, but I knew instantly he was a God-send. We look back and see that only God could have orchestrated something like this business—we were not looking for a business for a twelve-year-old knife addict.

My friend was an incredible help. He shared his insight from experience and practical help that set my business on the right track. My business was years ahead of others in the market from the very beginning. Even now, I have an edge on my competition

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

that enables me to operate with minimal competition. His only requirement for mentoring me was that I never set up my business in direct competition to him—could you imagine operating a business in competition against a knife-addicted child (some have experienced that nightmare—tough business)? To this day, we network together and never compete for our market directly against one another. This relationship set a great foundation for my business.

Years have come and gone. The experiences have astounded me. You can't learn these things in any classroom or textbook. I have learned so much. One experience that stands out over the years as probably the most influential was my interaction with Mr. Chuck Buck, the owner of Buck Knives (still one of my favorite companies to work with).

I purchased a Buck Lighting HTA II knife. This was one just for ME. I was immediately impressed with its quality and workmanship. When I received it there was a note in it from Mr. Chuck Buck, the owner of Buck Knives, with his mailing address in it. I then, mailed him a letter telling him how happy I was with his product. I never expected anything from it. I just wanted to let them know how much I enjoyed their brand new product and that I would be endorsing and selling them wholeheartedly.

Imagine my surprise when I received a personal letter back from Mr. Chuck Buck—himself. The letter said that he was glad that I had enjoyed his product and furthermore that he noticed that I was a Christian from the way that I had signed my letter "In Christ Jesus our Lord." He said that God was the only thing that kept him going through the thick and thin. This really impressed me and challenged me as a Christian. Needless to say, this also made me an even more loyal Buck customer!

As my business has continued to grow, I have learned lessons that will help me in the future. I have learned business basics such as how to take inventory, add up money, budget for more inventory, figure taxes, and to pay for every expense in CASH at the time of purchase. Most importantly, I have learned how to treat my customers first-hand through experience. I have always endeavored to treat my customers the way I wish to be treated. I have always wanted the best products at the best price with the best service. This is my personal goal with Matthew's Cutting Edge. Through it all, just the same as Mr. Chuck Buck, I have learned that God will take you through every mountain and valley of life (and business) and He will direct your path through it all. God has been faithful to teach me lessons that I could never have learned anywhere else.

To think, it all began with my dad and mom giving me that bit of trust with that small knife. Just imagine...that spark of an interest led me to the place I am at today, run-

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

ning a very enjoyable business and doing what I really love the most—buying and selling the sharpest knives around!

Thank you our loyal customer for you undying support for all we do. We are glad to have you and hope you find all your needs met here at Matthew's Cutting Edge.

Enjoy and God bless.

-Matthew E. Rushton, the owner of *Matthew's Cutting Edge*



Tips from Great Men and Women In Business...

By Matthew Rushton



Ever wondered how the great business men and women—like Sam Walton, Mary Kay, S. Truett Cathy—became so successful? Did you know that there are some common denominators, characteristics, that all of them have in common? Let me share with you some of those common denominators. You may just be the very next Sam Walton, Mary Kay, or S. Truett Cathy!

Begin Now!

Today is the perfect day for YOU to begin your own business. Looking at the lives of all of the most successful men and women in business, they all had one thing in common—they were all kids in business!

S. Truett Cathy, owner of Chick-Fil-A, entered into the business world at 8-years-old. His first business venture was to sell ice-cold Coca-Colas door-to-door during the summer. He was so hooked that later in the winter, he diversified his business venture to sell everyone's favorite magazines and newspapers door-to-door. He has been in business every since that young age of 8.

Bill Rancic, chosen as *The Apprentice* by Donald Trump in Season 1, got his first taste of business as a little boy making "tips" for cooking and serving pancakes to his grandmother's friends. ☺

Sam Walton, world famous entrepreneur and founder of Walmart, joined the leagues of kids in business. He worked his way through college managing multiple paper routes, hiring little boys on bicycles to deliver the papers.

There are many other examples. Every one of the most successful business men and women began young in business and worked until they died! Begin now! You just might be the very next history-maker!

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

Expect Tough Times...AND Be Molded Into Greatness by Them!

What do S. Truett Cathy, Mary Kay, Sam Walton, Dave Thomas, and Colonel Sanders, all have in common?

- ⇒ All came from The Great Depression!
- ⇒ All were tried by fire (and tough times!)

Don't let tough times get you down or discourage you. Tough times are pivotal to great success!

Don't Waste Even ONE Minute!

Again, most of the most successful men and women in business began working as kids. Almost all began (and never stopped!) having businesses at only the age of 8. No video games for these young entrepreneurs. No TV—or at the most it was minimal in their lives. Work was their play—and STILL IS!

One interesting common thread among the greatest entrepreneurs is their daily schedule. Almost all of the top men and women in business get up at 5 AM every morning. One interesting person was Mary Kay. Mary Kay began getting up at 5 AM every morning after realizing that she was not having enough time in her day. She began thinking that if she would just get up 3 hours earlier for 3 times a week, she would have a whole extra 9-hour workday each week. Then, she realized that if she would get up 3 hours earlier 6 times a week, she gained two full 9-hour workdays every single week. She always got up at 5 AM from then on. Mary Kay was not the only great businessperson to rise early. Also included in the 5 AM bunch are: Donald Trump, S. Truett Cathy, and Sam Walton.

Plus! Another common denominator! They don't waste even one minute of their day! Mary Kay contributed her success to her "\$35,000 list." Before bed every night, she would write a list of "to-do's" to accomplish the next day. Donald Trump does not "waste time" on long lunches—when he does have lunch, he has a "working lunch" over business.

Want to join the greatest men and women in business history? Make the most of every single minute. Don't waste even one minute!

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

Learn for Life!

Want to be the best you can be? Learn for your entire life. Learn in all areas of your life. This will give you a common characteristic with those who have made history in the business world.

We are not specifically talking about school—college. Rather, we are talking about learning for life! If there was some area that they wanted to learn about, they dug in and learned it. Each and every one that I have studied read extensively. All endeavored to read for 2 hours a day! Each of them constantly learned from people. They surrounded themselves with great people. They sought out people who were the best in a specific area and learned from them. They kept (keep) learning their entire lives. No mistakes wiped them out—they learned from every mistake. If something intrigued them, they researched it until they were the best in that area too! They never stopped learning. It was a life pursuit! To become great, we should follow their example.

Highly Competitive!

Looking at the great businessmen and women, each one had a highly competitive spirit. They not only competed within their industry, but ruled their industry—many even after their death! Look at Walmart. Look at Mary Kay. Their competition was not really other businesses. Their real competition that drove them was against themselves. They were such high achievers that they set a goal and not only topped that goal, but tripled it many times! They were THE BEST!

Learn to compete against yourself. Set your own goals. Set them high! Then, top those goals! You will only be as great as you really want to be.

Live Simple Lives...

Looking at the background of the greatest men and women in business, each came from very humble roots. Wealth was never the goal. It was just a by-product of their hard work, diligence, and commitment. Even once wealthy, they were very simple people, living very simple lives. Sam Walton, as a multi-billionaire, drove the same pick-up truck that he had drove for years. He lived in the same house. He did not spend his money frivolously.

Does Donald Trump seem extravagant to you? When he goes out to eat, he doesn't spend HIS MONEY on food. His meals are all either "on the house" or paid for by

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

someone else. He is a walking advertisement for anyone who wants to give him products or services. But, his money only makes him money!

Be simple. Do not drain more than you achieve. Don't waste your money on frivolous things. Be wise with all that you have.

Family in Business...It's a Family Thing!

Looking over the lives of the men and women that I have studied over the years, one interesting factor that has led to their greatness rings out true of every single one of them. They all operate their businesses as a **Family Business**.

S. Truett Cathy started his business with his brother. To this day, his whole family is involved. His wife speaks at Chick-Fil-A Grand Opening Events. His sons, daughter, and grandchildren all participate in the business.

Mary Kay began her business with her husband, who died unexpectedly just weeks before her grand opening. One of her sons stepped up in his place to help her manage the business. Her whole family worked together through the years up until her death. Today, they continue that legacy.

Chuck Buck, owner of Buck Knives, picked up the family business from his father who had continued his father's business of knife making. To this day, Chuck Buck and his son continue that legacy.

Donald Trump really got started working for his father. His job was to help with collections for the family business. This spawned his calling for the higher-end properties, where people had millions of dollars to spend. Now, he still works with his family—his brother and his sons.

Sam Walton began his business, Walmart, as a family enterprise. To this day, even after his death, Walmart remains a family owned and operated company.

Want to be great? Find a way to work your business into a family business. Something that you can share with your existing family and generations to come.

Leave a Legacy...

Every single person that we have studied through the years has another common denominator—they were living their lives with purpose. They wanted to achieve much.

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

They set high goals with a higher purpose and reached them! In turn, they changed the culture around them and became history makers. They left an ongoing legacy.

- ⇒ Mary Kay changed women in business forever. She developed a system of business that gave a picture of God's design in business.
- ⇒ S. Truett Cathy has faithfully served God before his customers for decades. Following God has set him apart as a business leader and brought immeasurable blessings as a result. Through looking at his life story, we see how God prospers a faithful business owner.
- ⇒ Chuck Buck has remained a Christian witness in the knife industry. He followed God each step of the way to business success. Now, he exhorts others to do the very same thing.

They made history. So, what about YOU? Ready to be a history maker? Want your own business? Hum....you might just be the very next successful business story!



Quick Tips on How To Begin Your Own Business (And...Call It School!)

By Matthew Rushton



Want your own business? Got an idea that you are dying to try? Have no idea what to do, just want money of your own? Here are some ideas on how to get started with your own business. Let's take it step-by-step...

- ⇒ **Brainstorm.** What are your interests? Who are you? What do you know? What do you love and enjoy? What can you do that others need? Do you constantly see a need in an area? Bobcat? Help others homeschool? Knives that are good quality and great prices? Brainstorm. Make a list. What are you seeing?
- ⇒ **Brainstorm again!** How can you turn your interests into a fun business? There are three types of businesses—sales, service, and information. Are there supplies that you can sell to help others with your interest? Is there a service that you see needs to be available to others like you? Is there a need for information on the topic that you love—workshops, books, classes, tutorials? Go back over your list and brainstorm some business ideas to go along with your interests.
- ⇒ **Find existing examples/mentors.** What is already out there? What gaps are being left? Is there a need that you can fill? This should begin to show you a specific niche that you could fill. What would your niche be? Is there a need for a business in that area?
- ⇒ **Is there a need for what YOU do?** Is there a way you can network (work with others) to fill a need in the area of your interest? My dad has a construction business. He is very gifted at building anything. He found a neat niche for himself after meeting a man who was a salesperson for a playground company. The salesman does not install the playgrounds himself. Dad does not sell the playgrounds. Each fills a niche and has his own company. Both work great together networking with their own specific abilities.
- ⇒ **Read and research.** Get to know about other businesses and their success

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

stories. Read books and magazines. Look for great biographies of men and women in business. Watch videos, documentaries, biographies and TV interviews. You will learn secrets of great people without having to live out the tough lessons of life that they have experienced.

⇒ **Make a plan.** Got an idea? How do you take an idea and make it into a business? Here are the quick steps...

- **Decide on your business.** What will you do for your business? What will you offer?
- **What will you name your business?** Will you name it a "sell-able" name that you could sell to someone later if you want to move on—Dependable Construction? Will you name it something that you want to keep—Matthew's Cutting Edge?
- **Who will your customer be?** How do you plan to reach them? Will you go to them? Will you find customers in the classified ads? Will you stay in contact with a newsletter? Will you offer your products through a catalog? Will you set up a display at a flea market, trade show, expo, or a store? Will you spread the word using business cards?
- **How will you meet their needs?** Will you travel to them? Will you set up a retail store? Will you offer your product by mail order? Will you have an internet store? Think of what works for you and your life. Think of how your customers will best respond.
- **How much time will it take?** How can you add this business to your day?
- **How much will it cost?** How do you get started? Do you have savings? Do you have materials or equipment that you can use? Do you need to work for someone to earn money for your initial start-up?

⇒ **Get it all together!** Get everything organized. Set up your work area. Your office. Your warehouse. Your supplies. Set up any systems of managing your work. Set up a schedule for your time. Get ready to give it a try!

⇒ **Dig in!** Go for it! Have fun! You might just be the very next S. Truett Cathy... Mary Kay...or Donald Trump!



10 Tips Sure to Make Your Business Great!

By Matthew Rushton



Do you want to have the best business ever? Do you want to take your business and make it all it can be? Do you really want to be successful? Try these tips. You are sure to make your business great!

1. **Do what you love.** Find something you love and are deeply interested in. Use this as the basis of what you do. If you do not love what you are doing, find something that you love. Make it your life work.
2. **Be a servant.** Look for ways to serve your customers daily. Find the little things that make their day. Do them.
3. **Be a go-getter!** Have initiative! Don't waste even one minute. You are what makes your business what it is. If you want for your business to be great, be great!
4. **Be dependable.** Be something that the world can count on. Be there when you say you will be there. Do what you say you are going to do. That makes a good business even greater.
5. **Be a witness.** Be a glory to God through your business. People notice the little things. Those things are a witness for or against God. Witness without a word.
6. **Use your Spiritual Gifts IN your business.** Find your Spiritual Gifts. Find those things that God has naturally gifted you with. Find ways to use them in your business dealings. You will shine!
7. **Create customer loyalty.** Make them bound to you. What keeps them coming back to you rather than the competition? Make sure you find that out. Make that your primary focus.
8. **Use business as SCHOOL.** Learn from everything. Learn from every experi-

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

ence. Use your business to learn valuable life lessons.

9. **Make sure you are original and STAY that way.** Don't do anything because someone else makes it look fun. It will make YOU miserable. Look for what you and only you can do. Look for what you are really good at. Do that.
10. **Set yourself apart!** What makes you different from everyone else in the world? What do you have that no one else can offer to others? Set yourself apart from the competition. Be all you are! Be all that you can be!

So, ready? Use these ideas and you are sure to make your business become great!



So... You Wanta Be A Writer? Get a Website!

By Cindy Rushton



Want to write? There are a few things that are absolute **MUSTS**—a website is one! Websites today are **VERY** easy. There are so many options! You have just **GOTTA** have a website! If you are “challenged” in the area of computer literacy or even financially, you can still have a website very easily.

Try a Blog!

One option is to begin a Blog. You can get a **FREE** Blog of your own at: <http://www.homeschoolblogger.com>. Just register with the name you want to use, choose a template, and begin your own Blog. A Blog is an informal website. You can post articles, tips, journal entries, or anything that you want. I have several reasons that I recommend this to you-

1. You can set it up for **FREE!**
2. You can post your material yourself without a web designer.
3. You can become more familiar with web design.
4. You have a place to keep your work online!
5. You have a “place” to send people who are interested in your work.
6. You can write every day or as you can!
7. Oh! You **CAN DO IT!**

Get Your Own Website!

Another option is to get your own website. I cannot recommend highly enough that you invest in your own website. It is one of the most important things that a writer can do. It is like a “home” on the web for you! Invest in that “cyber-real estate” today! Here are some pointers that will make your website all it can be...

- ⇒ **Invest today at MINIMUM in your own web address—buy YOUR NAME.** If your own name is available, invest in it today—even if you are not building the website immediately. For years, I wrestled with a vision for my web-

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

site. In that time, I did NOTHING! For real! When I decided that I wanted to move forward, I was blessed with some of the best advice ever from a dear friend. I was advised to set up my website with MY NAME as the web address—for real: www.CindyRushton.com. I felt SO awkward in doing so. It just seemed a bit self-promoting—exactly! ☺ If you are a writer, you MUST promote yourself. You have to get beyond the fears and trepidations. Think for a minute. If you wanted to find me on the web, what would you look for? I have now written almost 80 books, would my website be titled under one of them? I produce 6 ezines? Would my website be best set up under one of those? What about my business name? We have three businesses at this time and we are considering expanding into a couple of others? Which one would you look for? Do you even know their names? Yes, the most reasonable name for all I do is MY OWN NAME—<http://www.CindyRushton.com>. It tells who I am today...and tomorrow! And...yours will too! Invest in YOUR name as your website!

- ⇒ **Create a HOME on the Web.** Don't just make it a website with information about products—I HATE THOSE! Don't you? They give NOTHING for the reader to enjoy today or to come back for later. If they do not buy the product at that time, you lose them. Rather, make a website that is a HOME on the web! Make your website a reflection of YOU! Include your articles/poems/tip sheets. Include fresh material through an Ezine or a Blog. Set up your website with a sampling of who you are and what you love to write on. Then, you will create a successful website that makes your readers want to buy your work as it comes out in print.
- ⇒ **Set up an Ezine or Blog.** Have fresh new material on a regular basis. Reach your readers either through an Ezine—that is emailed to them each time you send it out, or through a Blog—that they can visit regularly.
- ⇒ **Begin to Develop your Mailing List.** One last thing! Don't lose those that come by your website. Be sure to set up a form for capturing their addresses. Make it easy to use. Offer them something for free—a subscription to your E-zine...a free E-book...a free bonus. Just adding a form on your website or Blog will capture hundreds of people who are interested in following you through the years. Begin yours TODAY!

A website may seem very intimidating, but you can do it! Find a company with easy templates or find a neat web designer who can help you get started. Set it up to be a reflection of who YOU are. You will find it to be your favorite tool as a writer!

Easy E-books and Books on CD...

By Cindy Rushton

*Excerpted from Cindy's NEW Book, **Homemade Books! Yes! YOU Can Be a Writer Too!***



Intrigued by Ebooks? Want to create your book on CD? We can help you here too! Whether you already have a book that you want to transfer into a digital format or you simply prefer for your book to be published in this format first, you will find Ebooks and books on CD to be EASY to make!

What you need:

Adobe Acrobat... This is the program that produces the PDF format that you read on Adobe Reader. There are other programs on the market that can generate PDF or Ebooks, however Adobe cannot be beat! It is worth the investment.

Your book manuscript, ready to print... Your manuscript should be produced in a program that is compatible with your PDF maker. I use Microsoft Publisher and Adobe Acrobat. I am very pleased with the functionality and ease of use! These are my pick of all of the programs out there!

Make Your Book on CD...

1. **Set up your book** in your publishing program, ready to print (just like you would if you were printing in hard copy.). For me, once my books are in print, it is very simple to go back and transfer those books into an Ebook/CD format. If you already have your book in print or ready to print, you are ready for the next step...
2. **Print to Distiller.** If you are using Adobe Acrobat, the next step is SO easy! If Adobe Acrobat is installed in your system, all you have to do with your final manuscript is print to the distiller. This process is easy—follow these instructions:
 - With your program open, click FILE.
 - The drop down menu will pop down.
 - Click PRINT.
 - The Print Box will pop up. On that box, take a look at where your list of printer options can be clicked. There is a drop

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

down box there. It should show your default printer. **CLICK** that box.

- As the drop down options pops up, click **ACROBAT DISTILLER**.
- Then, click **OK**.
- Save file in your computer in a folder of its own (for the book), with the final name of the book as the file name and folder name.

Your program will automatically scroll your project into the PDF format.

2. **Set up your covers.** Although your book will not be "in print," it is very nice for your book to be complete for your customer. If your customer wanted to print their own copy of the book, they would need your cover to slide into a 3-ring binder cover or to laminate for a comb-bound version. For this reason, I transfer the cover of my books into a PDF format and add them to the front and back of my book before saving it on a CD. In order to do this, here are the instructions.

- Follow the above instructions to produce your book. Keep that file open and ready to use.
- Follow the above instructions for each cover to produce the cover as a PDF. I save my covers with the title specifying that it is my front or back cover for that particular book. I save these in my folder for the book—

For example-

My book title: **HOMEMADE BOOKS.pdf**

My front cover title: **HOMEMADEBOOKSF.C.PDF**

My back cover title: **HOMEMADEBOOKSB.C.PDF**

- Go to the book PDF. On the File Menu, click **DOCUMENT**.
- Next, click **INSERT**.
- A box will pop up that says **SELECT FILE TO INSERT**. Be sure that your first page is the first page of your book manuscript. Then, click the file for your book **FRONT COVER**.
- A box will pop up saying **INSERT PAGES**.
- Click **BEFORE** on the drop down menu.
- Then, click **FIRST**.
- Then, click **OK**
- The cover will be added to the front of the book.
- Click **SAVE** to save your book.
- Now, we will add your **Back Cover**.
- Scroll through your document to the very last page of your

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

manuscript.

- On the File Menu, click DOCUMENT.
 - Next, click INSERT.
 - A box will pop up that says SELECT FILE TO INSERT. Be sure that you are viewing the last page of the book at this time. Then, click the file for your book BACK COVER.
 - A box will pop up saying INSERT PAGES.
 - Click AFTER on the drop down menu.
 - Then, click LAST.
 - Then, click OK
 - The cover will be added to the back of the book.
 - Click SAVE to save your entire book.
 - You now have your entire book ready to be either an Ebook or a book on CDROM.
3. **Check through your book** to be sure that all pages are set up properly. Print one copy to check the manuscript for any formatting errors.
 4. **Save entire book.** We save our books in a folder on our computer set aside just for that book. Then, we save our book on a CD-ROM.
 5. **Produce your books.** You can continue to produce your books on CD by saving this file to a CD-ROM for each customer or gift.
 6. **Design a CD label and cover for your CD case.** We use a program that we purchased at Sam's Wholesale Warehouse. It is called *CD STOMPER*. It includes all you need to produce labels and covers for your CD cases. Sam's also sells CD Labels for use with the CD Stomper that is included in this package. Use their program to design your own CD labels and covers. I design my labels and covers to look like the covers of my printed books.
 7. **Print your CD label and cover.** Label your CD, insert the cover in the CD case, and place the new CD in its case. You are done!

Make Your Ebook...

1. **Follow directions above for transferring your book into PDF format and for setting up your book.**
2. **Save your book in a folder on your computer.**
3. **Back up your book on a CD.** We always save our books in several places—mistakes ALWAYS happen! We also keep a printed hard-copy of every format of our books. You can never be TOO SAFE! You CAN be sorry! (I know from horrible experience!)
4. **Upload your file to your website.**

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

5. **Set up a web page.** Set up a page where you will send your customer to download their Ebook. Give full instructions on the page for downloading and be sure to remind them that downloading may take a while depending upon their internet connection. Be sure that you include on that page a link to the Ebook file on your website. For examples on how this will open, see our articles on our website. They are free. They open just like your Ebook will.
6. **You are done!**

Develop the Disciplines of a Writer!

By Cindy Rushton



"Oh! Ugh! Cindy, DISCIPLINES?" Yes! But, relax! You are probably already on your way if you are even thinking about writing! ☺ These are the things that writers "happen" to "just do" in their everyday lives.

Read...Read...Read!

The very best writers are the most voracious readers! Give them a book and a quiet nook to read and you have just sent them to heaven on earth! Reading supplies ideas that get the mind thinking, fresh perspective, and even train the writing style of those who read. In studies, most writers tend to read at every opportunity, but those who are the most successful writers have a discipline of reading for at least 2 hours per day! So, want to be a writer? Read.

Keep an Idea Notebook (With YOU!)

You may prefer a pretty journal or a spiral notebook or you may be a fellow binder queen, loving the versatility of 3-ring binders. Whatever your preference, keep an Idea Notebook. Fill it with your brainstorm... outlines...ideas...rough drafts. Keep it with you. Work in it during your free time along the way. This ONE key will help you to develop your writing into all it can be, make you the most productive, and keep you organized along the way!

Write EVERY Day!

Yep! You will find this counsel in every writer's manual and in every class for writers. Does it work? Absolutely! I am not talking about writing a fresh manuscript or article each day. There are SO many ways that you can keep your skills fresh and develop them into greater skills.

For example, I recommend copying great quotes each day. As you read (did I mention to read every day? ☺), you will come across neat "gems" in your reading that beg for you to remember them. You know those quotes. Those that make you pause and soak

Getting Back To God's Design for the Godly Home

them in! Begin a journal that is specifically set aside for copying those quotes.

The fruit of this discipline can never be underestimated. It is not just for our budding young writers, it is a life discipline for those that really want to be all that they can be. In fact, in Deuteronomy 17:18-20, God commanded that as the kings sat on their throne, they copied the Law into a book that they could keep with them. Even God, Himself, keeps quotes in a book—see Malachi where He talks about how precious it is for Him to listen to His saints as they talk among themselves about Him. He loves what they say so much that He keeps a copy of those “gems” in HIS *Book of Remembrance*. HOOT! And...isn't God the most precious writer of all times? ☺ This may sound like an easy way to write every day, but it is a discipline that writers have had all throughout time. It will make a difference in your writing that will be immeasurable!

Also, try your hand at writing email or blogging (See my blog at <http://www.homeschoolblogger.com/CindyRushton>) or even beginning your own message board (See my board at <http://www.mom2momdiscussion.com>). You may want to join email discussion lists in areas of your interest or begin your own ezine. These are all wonderful ways that I keep myself writing every day, even when I am not working on a specific project. They make me THINK and keep my ideas organized. In fact, many times the very discussions or emails that I have written become articles or tip sheets later on. It is a fantastic way to write every day!

Of course, another way is to write bit-by-bit on your projects. Did you know that if you just write ONE chapter in a book a week, you will finish the typical book in only 10 weeks? In a year, you could finish 5 books! It just takes bit-by-bit, consistent effort! You can do it! Just write every day! ☺

Constantly Learn!

Yep! All great writers have a discipline to learn every day! Reading is a part of that, but not the whole. We are surrounded with information, ideas, and a need to “DO.” We should all be constantly learning for our entire lives. All writers who are prolific and successful are constantly learning. They are constantly growing. They are constantly developing as a person

In addition, they constantly learn about the art of writing. A writer never completely “arrives” at perfection. Writers must constantly work on the art of writing. Writing today is nothing like yesterday's writing and tomorrow's writing will not be like today's writing. It is constantly growing. Constantly changing.