

MOTHERHOOD: Dreams into Goals!



Do you ever feel overwhelmed with the HUGE task of motherhood? You look around and see casualties of poor parenting. The world is full of broken relationships and the dysfunction that those relationships spawn. Can you turn the tide in your own home? Of course you can!

We serve a BIG God who is capable and willing to do more than we could ever dream or dare to imagine. He is waiting on us to expand our vision and believe Him for miracles in our homes and children's lives. You can make a difference in this world by raising godly children!! You can fill this world with light by releasing godly men and women into the world, fully trained and ready to kick in the gates of hell and rescue captives.

Expand your vision! What do you want to see your children look like when they are adults? Stay focused on that picture. Don't be limited by lack of faith in what God can do in your children's lives. Dream BIG! Now, turn those pictures into measurable goals for your children and their lives. You can actually have goals and a plan for the amazing task of motherhood. God is good. He will help you and fulfill every good purpose! The picture you have of your children as adults is part of the "big picture."

Motherhood is manageable and full of purpose when we keep our eyes on the big picture. The "big picture" is simply our actual goals and plans for our children and what we are doing to see that they are fulfilled. Goals keep our focus on what is

necessary and prudent. Goals are the test for whether or not plans and activities are valuable or frivolous wastes of our time. Goals give us a sense of purpose and destiny. They direct our prayers, refine our characters, and shape our plans.

Jesus came to earth with a goal and a plan. He told His disciples many times that He had come to give His life for the lost. When He prayed in the Garden right before His arrest at the end of His life, He told the Father, "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do." (John 17:4)

Paul, also, ended his life sensing that he had fulfilled the purpose God had had for him. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (II Timothy 4:7)

In our home we have long-term goals for our children. They are our desires for them as adults. With each goal there are action plans to help bring about the goals. We keep these goals in mind as we make life choices.

Here are our long-term goals for our daughters and son:

THEY WILL HAVE AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD!

"Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" ' Matthew 22:36-40

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." Hebrews 12:28



It is my desire that my daughters, as grown women, will walk closely with Jesus loving Him with all their hearts, minds, and strength and that my son will have a passion for the Living God. They will see Him as the giver of all good things and give Him thanks and praise on a daily basis for His blessings. They will worship Him on a daily basis for His Character and Presence. They will read the Bible daily and obey it completely. They will ponder Scripture in their hearts

and seek to understand God more fully. They will be men and women who delight in studying God's Word. They will pour their hearts out to the Lord, being watchful and thankful for His answers to prayer.

Life is an adventure full of purpose when we walk with the Lord. Jesus saved me when I was 16 years old. I was amazed when He began to teach me through the Bible and prepare me through situations, people, teachings, prayer and promptings in my heart. He prepared me (and is preparing me still) for the call on my life. Soon after I was saved, I felt a strong desire to be a homemaker and raise children. I also had a strong desire to care for others, teach the Bible and lead people in worship. I was not ready for any of that yet. But God had a plan. He put the right sermons, people, circumstances, etc. in my life that shaped me into the woman I am today. And today I am delighted to be a stay-at-home mother homeschooling five children! I have a wonderful husband and together we enjoy opening our home for Bible studies and hospitality. I have the privilege of leading worship at our church. Believe it or not, now I sense God preparing me to be a grandmother and a Titus 2 woman--but I'm not there yet!

I long for my children to know the thrill of living out an adventure with God, as He prepares them for their (and their husbands' and wife's) call and destiny. God has good works for them to walk in. There are people He wants them to reach with the Gospel. There are adults and children (especially their spouse and children if God so blesses) that He wants them to love and nurture. Like Esther, I want my daughters to sense that they are here for such as time as this.

Action Plan:

- Mom and Dad model the kind of walk with Jesus that we want our daughters to have.
- Pray for their lifetime walks with the Lord daily.
- Daily family devotion time.
- Point out God's blessings and stop to thank Him often.
- Instill habit of daily personal devotions.
- Explain Scriptural principles and apply them to our lives as a family and individuals.
- Mom and Dad model the kind of walk with Jesus that we want our daughters to have.

THEY WILL HAVE GODLY CHARACTER.

"Make every effort to live in peace with men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son." Romans 8:28-29a



Not only will our children love Jesus, but we desire that they would imitate Him and His lifestyle; that Christ Jesus will be formed in their character. God will work every situation together for our good so that we can be like Jesus. We want our daughters and son to walk in the Spirit and to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that good fruit is produced in their lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. We also want them to be women of faith and hope who believe that God will keep His promises! The character traits that are especially beautiful in women (submission, reverence, gentle and quiet spirit, propriety, respect and a heart to nurture), we would like to see mature and fully developed in our little women. Those strengths that allowed Daniel to administer a kingdom, Nehemiah to rebuild the wall, and Joshua to take the land are the same ones we long to see in our son.

Action Plan:

- Model godly character.
- Pray for godly character to be produced in their lives.
- Memorize appropriate Scripture.
- Study character traits in Bible.
- Appreciate, affirm and approve of godly character demonstrated by good behavior, attitudes, and deeds.
- Punish behavior, attitudes and deeds that are displeasing to God.
- Provide opportunities to mature and develop character.

THEY WILL HAVE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS!

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." John 13:34-35

Our desire is that God's love would fill them to overflowing so that they will love others with selfless love which does not seek its own but others' good. They will remember that only Jesus, His Word and people last forever and they will make decisions accordingly. We want our children to love and enjoy people, to have affection for others, to serve others with glad hearts and to always be kind. We also want them to be able to communicate with others verbally, in writing and through the arts with graciousness, conciseness, and concreteness from a servant's heart. We want them to be able to walk through conflict and hurt Biblically; confronting when necessary (Matthew 18:) forgiving, and avoiding gossip and all other negative forms of communication.

It is also our hope that their love will flow into action: meeting practical needs, showing hospitality, caring for the sick and distressed, helping those in difficulty, and being generous on every occasion. We want them to make others comfortable by being good listeners and displaying common courtesies on all occasions to all people. Above all, we want them to be "others-centered" rather than self-centered.

Action Plan:

- Model healthy relationships inside and outside home.
- Pray for them to grow in love, communication and relating to God and others.
- Learn to relate to parents and siblings in a way that honors God.
- Require that conflict is handled according to Biblical principles.
- Require kindness in word and deed in the family and toward outsiders.
- Oversee their friendships with other children, teaching them to choose friends with like values and beliefs.
- Affirm growth in these areas. Commend love and kindness.

THEY WILL BE COMMITTED TO A LOCAL CHURCH!

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others." Romans 12:4-5



I love our church! God has brought wonderful people into our family's life through our local church. They love us, encourage us, pray for us, and hold us accountable. Our church fellowship is like an extended family.

Church is not a meeting or a club to us. Church is God's people--the ones we're spending forever with! What a privilege to love and learn and grow together!

Most of our dearest friendships have been built serving the Lord together through church. As we minister together, seeking God's Kingdom--He knits our hearts. We want our children to always experience the joy of belonging to a good church.

We desire that our children and their future families be linked up to a local expression of the Body of Christ where the Bible is preached and practiced. Jesus set up the church. They will need the church to grow to full maturity and the church will need them to be faithful to use their gifts to build up the body.

We want to be a family with a focus. That focus is Jesus and His Kingdom. We minister to people right in our living room. Our children are with us as we share the Gospel and pray for people and they help us!

Action Plan:

- Model faithful commitment to a local body of believers.
- Attend worship services, small groups and church activities as a family.
- Serve in ministry as a family.
- Pray that the girls and boy will be part of a Bible-believing church where they can grow and be used by God to help others grow.
- Speak highly of the leaders and members of the church. Treat them as family with love, respect and commitment. Build relationships with other families. Adopt
- singles into home.
- Each member of family discover their unique spiritual gifts and be faithful in using them.

THEY WILL MAKE DISCIPLES!

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.'" Matthew 28:18-20

"And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." Colossians 4:3-6

Our purpose as Christians is to reproduce. We want our daughters to have a heart to fulfill the Great Commission. This will involve initiating conversations and relationships with unbelievers; sharing the Gospel clearly and effectively; and helping new believers get grounded in their new faith. We want our children to reach out to neighbors, family members, and people in their city who need Jesus. And to take part in taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth, especially to unreached people groups, by either going, sending, or praying.



Action Plan:

- Model an evangelistic lifestyle.
- Pray for God to put his heart for the lost in our children and to give them the privilege of sharing the Gospel and leading others to Christ.
- Pray as a family for the lost and for nations.
- Study pertinent Scripture.
- Teach children to share the Gospel at an early age with memory verses.
- Provide opportunities to practice.
- Teach children to greet people and to initiate conversation in a polite, respectful way.

THEY WILL HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM FOR EVERY AREA OF LIFE!

"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'" Genesis 1:28

"These commandments that I give you here today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them to your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." Deuteronomy 6:6-9

God gave people the job of caring for and subduing the earth. Contrary to Disney movies, we are not on the same level as the birds and beasts and trees. We actually have authority over God's creation. With authority comes responsibility. It is our responsibility to "know our stuff" so we can fulfill God's purpose. This stewardship goes beyond personal property and relationships but extends to all of life here in this world. "Ruling over" and "subduing" the earth can involve caring for nature; designing and building cities; medical research; painting a masterpiece; equipping people to earn a living; giving food and money to poor people; or managing a household. Before we can do any of these things, we have to acquire knowledge and skills based on God's truth.



Action Plan:

- Model a teachable heart and the application of Biblical principles to all of life.
- Pray for our children to learn what is good and to acquire wisdom.
- Study the Bible diligently and apply to every subject studies in school.
- Teach each school subject from a Biblical perspective.
- Cover a broad range of subjects so that children can "taste" various things in order to discern interest or special aptitude. In God's economy, no subject studied goes to waste!
- Instill a sense of stewardship for their time, money, talents, possessions and knowledge.

THEY WILL HAVE DILIGENT WORK HABITS!

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:23,24

"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son." Proverbs 10:4-5

Somewhere along the line, the desire to plan, execute and complete their own work (including chores, schoolwork, ministry, etc.) needs to come. Laziness and idleness give the flesh and Satan a field day. Industriousness is commended by God. We desire industrious children who will accomplish all that God has for them to do with a cheerful heart and unwavering faithfulness.

Action Plan:

- Model diligent work habits.
- Pray that God will build them in their lives.
- Require all tasks to be done cheerfully, completely and to the best of their ability.
- Reward initiative and hard work.
- Train them to manage their time, money and schoolwork.
- Be responsible to keep room in order and fulfill household responsibilities.

THEY WILL ACQUIRE ALL THE NECESSARY LIFESKILLS!

"Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding....rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning." (Proverbs 9:6,8b,9)

"Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6

"Buy the truth and do not sell it, get wisdom, discipline and understanding." Proverbs 23:23

We want our children to be ready to live the adult life; able to manage their time, money, possessions, households, careers, relationships, private thoughts and emotions. This area is so broad. Here is a list of things we hope our children can accomplish proficiently:

Healthy nutrition, exercise, sleep and hygiene habits.
Health care wisdom--choosing doctor and dentists, first aid skills, treating minor illnesses with natural remedies.

Decision making with the acceptance of personal responsibility and consequences.

Organization--time, plans, record keeping, home, room, and "stuff".

Manage money--tithing, giving, budget, saving, investing, balancing checkbook, avoiding credit, preparing taxes, paying bills.

Effective communication--conversational, letter writing, formal speaking, formal writing, creative writing, teaching.

Shopping--discerning quality, determining need, better to buy or make?, bargain hunting, bartering, recognizing advertising techniques.

Personal property stewardship--maintaining, fixing, storing,

Car stewardship--cleaning, changing oil, safe driving skills

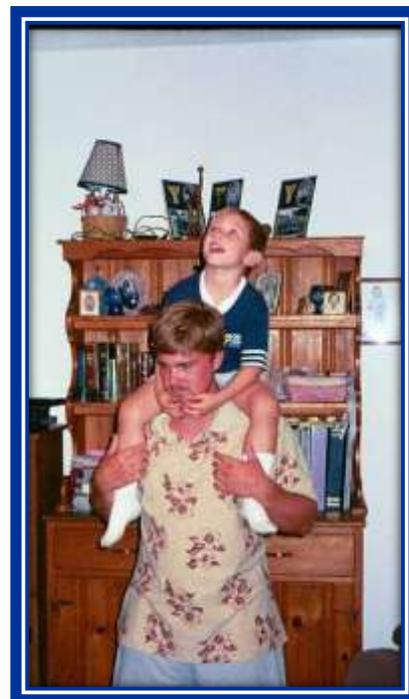
Home stewardship--maintaining appliances, caring for furniture, painting, wallpapering, minor repairs, lawn maintenance, landscaping, interior decorating

Propriety in wardrobe

Good manners and knowing others' expectations

U.S. citizen responsibilities--voting, studying issues and candidates, contacting legislatures, helping with campaigns.

Type, use computer, access internet



Action Plan

- Model these things.
- Pray that our children will be equipped for life.
- Teach specific tasks and skills.

**THEY WILL BE PREPARED FOR COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE,
CHILDREARING AND HOMEMAKING!**

**"By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established;
through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."
Proverbs 24:3-4**

"A wife of noble character is her husband's crown!" Proverbs 12:4

**"Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why
one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit
and do not break faith with the wife of your youth." Malachi 2:15**

While the media and the public school system are busy preparing this nation's children for self-centered living, divorce, and latch-key kids, we want to prepare our daughters for healthy marriages and happy homes.

A marriage's level of happiness is dependent upon the character and commitment of husband and wife. A godly couple committed for the long haul will enjoy one another and their children. At a young age children need to understand the purpose of marriage and that it is a lifetime commitment. They need to be envisioned to train the next generation and pass on a godly heritage. Girls need to be prepared to help their husbands, nurture their children and keep house. Boys need to be prepared to provide, protect their families and lead their homes.

When Julianna was 3 years old a single friend mentioned going on a date. "You can't go on a date until you're married!" she promptly informed our friend. In her young mind, she assumed that affection and dating were reserved for your lifelong mate. Isn't it sad that many in our culture give their best to relationships that don't even end up in marriage? We want our daughters to look forward to marriage as something worth waiting for and be delighted with the husbands that God will bring.

Action Plan:

- Share personal experience of courtship with daughters--what we're glad of and what we'd do differently.
- Model a good marriage. Show affection, appreciation and respect for one another.
- Meredith--model joyful commitment to mothering, homemaking and homeschooling. Express appreciation for Mike's provision, protection, and leadership.
- Mike--model joyful commitment to providing, protecting and leading. Express appreciation for wife's room in the home. Esteem godly womanhood (important in our feminist culture!).
- Pray for God to prepare our daughters to be excellent wives, mothers and keepers at home. Pray for their future mates.
- Teach children to choose relationships on basis of people's character not appearance, personality or own emotions.
- Study Biblical principles together about roles and responsibilities of husband and wife. Memorized key verses and passages.
- Cultivate commitment in children to remain pure emotionally and physically until marriage.
- Acquire necessary skills for homemaking: cooking, sewing, baking, needlecraft, laundry, shopping, cleaning, gardening, supervising, memory making and recording, interior decorating, hospitality, etc.
- Acquire parenting skills: nurturing, comforting, teaching, training, discipline, physical care.
- Acquire knowledge about child development, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing.

THEY WILL HAVE MARKETABLE SKILLS THAT CAN BE USED IN HAVING THEIR OWN BUSINESS!

"He who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honored." Proverbs 27:18

"Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow." Proverbs 13:11

"All hard work brings a profit but mere talk leads only to poverty." Proverbs 14:23



Fine craftsmanship and specialized skills/wisdom are still valued. Our goal is that our children will have skills or expertise that is marketable. We want our daughters to be equipped to make money from their home if they ever need to. We want our sons to be able to start their own businesses if they so desire. We would like to set them up in a cottage industry that would be able to support their college education.

Action Plan:

- Allow children to experiment with various home businesses.
- Study Biblical principles of economics and business.
- Teach marketable skills.
- Teach bookkeeping skills.
- Mentoring relationships with home business owners.
- Apprenticeship.

THEY WILL BE FILLED WITH JOY!!!

"All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast....A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news health to the bones." Proverbs 15:15, 30

"A cheerful heart is good medicine but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." Proverbs 17:22

"Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'" Nehemiah 8:10

"Be joyful always; Pray continually; Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." I Thessalonians 5:16-18

Jesus let us know that in this world we would see troubles, but He also promised us JOY! Joy is the birthright of every child of God. We can choose to enjoy the Lord, His people, and His blessings. Or we can choose to focus on our trials, difficulties and problems. There is so much to be thankful for! There is so much about Jesus to rejoice in! We want our children to walk in joy!

In Nehemiah, the context of God's joy being our strength is a celebration declared by the Lord through the prophets. He told the people to set aside time to rejoice and delight in Him. We also need to follow the Lord's leading in setting aside time to relax and celebrate God's goodness to us. This can include holidays, birthdays, making Sundays special or vacations. My girls love to get out the lace tablecloth and eat by candlelight. We love to decorate our house and dress up for special events. We love to sing, laugh, tell jokes and make up silly stories. We have established traditions that give us an identity as a family and pass on spiritual truths. As we live out life today, it is our goal that our daughters will look back with glad hearts and happy memories. And that they will carry into their own homes a sense of celebration, fun and delight in the Lord..

YEARLY GOALS

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. The LORD works out everything for his own end!" Proverbs 16:3

Yearly goals narrow down our focus and help in making decisions for the school year: What curriculum to buy. What Scripture to study. What verses to memorize. What character traits to focus on. What lifeskills to teach. Yearly goals are made in light of long-term goals.

Yearly goals are geared to each specific child and are affected by their temperaments, gifting, interests, personal goals, character, physical development, intellectual ability and emotional stability.

Here are some examples from the year 1996.



Katie Beth

- Continue daily quiet times growing in asking inductive questions about passage reading. Complete Precepts study on John.
- Acquire foundational drawing skills. Complete two drawing workbooks and bimonthly sketching of household objects.
- Use correct grammar and spelling in writing projects.
- Learn 32 Greek and Latin roots. Recognize them in real-life reading.
- Complete simple sewing projects: a pillowcase, apron, needlebook, pincushion, skirt, apron and patchwork pillow.

Julianna

- Learn geography basics and study ten different countries' landforms, climate, people and religion. Prepare a meal for each country studied.
- Acquire basic baking skills. Bake twice a month--wide variety including muffins, cookies, quick breads, cakes and pies.
- Progress in reading to enjoying longer books. Read aloud daily to sister to grow in oral reading skills and to build relationship with Jenny Rose.

Jenny Rose

- Recognize letters and numbers.
- Realize that letters represent sounds.
- Do chores (making bed, cleaning up toys after play, and emptying trash can) without reminders.
- Memorize one short verse a month.
- Help with gardening--watering and weeding.

Sarah Joy

- Have a full tummy and a dry diaper.
- Hear the Bible read aloud each day.
- Know that she is loved and adored by her family and Jesus.
- Accomplish developmental milestones (e.g. crawling, standing, walking, talking)

Parenting is the most important investment you will ever make. If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail. Set goals for yourself and your children. Make plans to see those goals fulfilled. No time is wasted that is invested in raising the next generation!