Published on *mache.org* (http://www.mache.org)

Enjoying the Gift of Homeschooling

Tags: encouragment high school homeschooling HSLDA

Dear Friends,

It has been 15 years since I completed homeschooling and my last child entered college. As I look back over those years, there were special blessings I received from the Lord that I want to share with you. The first thing I want to say is that I am really pulling for you. I know you face things you never counted on when you set out on this journey. There are joys and disappointments, and for some, tragedies. The one thing I can assure you is that the Lord is with you--every day, every step. My prayer is that you will realize His presence and trust in His guidance.

My first and persistent awareness in those early years was that I was inadequate to the task. I felt like I was entering a great unknown. The outcome was so important, but there were no guarantees that I was even on the right track. It occurred to me more than once that I might be damaging my children for life. There were no studies or research about the success of homeschooling. I had never heard of scope and sequence and just figured I needed to turn a few more pages each day than I had the day before. In the early 80s when we began, the number one focus for most of us homeschooling families was building Christian character into our children's lives. As far as books went, we found what we could and did our best.

Today I realize that the Lord was faithful when I asked for His help. To that end, prayer became my constant companion. I learned to bring every uncertainty to Him. I brought my children's illnesses and character flaws, as well as my insecurities and periodic burnout to Him. Each year I asked the Lord for direction even to the point of asking what courses to teach and what books to use. The number one bit of advice I give to every homeschool parent is to develop your prayer life. Over time, I realized that the Lord wanted to build faith into my children's lives by meeting our needs and answering our prayers.

My second piece of advice is to depend on God. There were many days when I asked Him to give me the motivation to continue. Homeschooling seemed endless with few breaks. I had to depend on him to give me the get-up-and-go to homeschool each day. Letting Him know that we can't do it without Him seems to release His grace into our efforts. Before I knew it, we were doing exactly that and were witnessing His hand in our lives.

The last point I want to share is that as the years pass, the memories grow more precious. My theory is that God just keeps blessing our sacrifice and obedience to raise up our children for Him long after our homeschool years are over. The hundreds of days on the sofa reading out loud to each other, the field trips we did almost every Friday, the trips to the used book store to fill a shopping bag with books to read, the hours of conversation, sharing ideas, reading the Bible and praying together; no one can take that from us. I believe the closeness we enjoyed as a family can't be reproduced outside of homeschooling. We were able to enjoy each other so much because we didn't let the outside world rob us of leisure and uninterrupted time together. You might say we majored in relationship building.

I believe that the Lord's special blessing, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" awaits you, too. So take time to smell the flowers. Don't rush through your homeschool experience so you can do something else. Enjoy the gift of homeschooling and you, too, will have memories that will fill your heart with the assurance that you have lived out your purpose and godly calling.

Merry Christmas,
Elizabeth Smith

We add our warmest wishes for a Christmas season that is full of an awareness of the Lord's joy, peace, and love.

Becky Cooke and Diane Kummer
HSLDA High School Coordinators

This resource is an article from the *Homeschooling Thru Highschool* newsletter (12/2/2010), and is provided by the Home School Legal Defense Association as a service to the homeschooling community.

To subscribe to the newletter, please click here. For more information about the HSLDA, please click here.

Author: Becky Cooke
Diane Kummer

Source URL (retrieved on *05/23/2013 - 3:56am*): http://www.mache.org/resources/article/11-26-2011/enjoying-gift-homeschooling