

Called Home:

FINDING JOY IN LETTING GOD LEAD YOUR HOMESCHOOL

By

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Designed and published by Farmhaus Studios

Edited by Linda Singerle

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Simply Living... for Him

Please visit me at <http://www.simplylivingforhim.com> and join me as we encourage one another to live more simply for the glory of God.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In November of 2011, I released my first ebook, *Simply Homeschool: Having Less Clutter and More Joy in Your Homeschool*. The response was humbling. I was thrilled that so many were blessed by it. Shortly after, I wrote this book to further encourage others not to just rid ourselves of distractions and simplify our lives and homeschools, but to completely surrender our homeschools to God and let Him lead us. Having seen the fruits of this in my own homeschool, I am convinced it is necessary if we are to be truly successful in our endeavors—not to be successful by the world’s standards, but by His.

God has blessed me with the desire and passion to encourage other homeschooling families. The fact that I am able to do so is a true testament to the power that can be unleashed in all of us if we surrender our whole selves to Him. May all Glory be to God for all that He has done.

Above all, I want to thank Jesus Christ for dying for me and saving me. I am nothing without this truth being lived out each day. I want to thank my husband whose unconditional support in all of my endeavors is always present, my children who inspire me and give me hope for a future generation, and my family who knows where we have been and how far we have come. God is good.

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time, I was a scared mom preparing to send my firstborn to school. Then God stepped in. He changed my plans. He turned my world upside down. Even when it was the hardest, most frightening task I had ever faced, He worked, leading me to places I had never imagined with my family. Today, He continues to lead us. So often we resist and things are hard. Yet, when we surrender our plans, listen to Him, and let Him lead, there is peace. It is still hard at times, but with His strength and His leading, it becomes easier. There is joy in doing what He has called us to do.

“The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad..”

Psalm 126:3

This fall I will embark on my 11th year of homeschooling. (Boy, I never thought I'd say those words! We started out trying it for “just one year..”) Maybe you are just starting out, or maybe you have been doing this awhile. Either way, you have most likely experienced some amount of fear—fear of the major responsibility that homeschooling is, or fear that you aren't doing it “right.” Perhaps you are tired. Burnt out. Running on empty. Maybe you are up to your eyeballs in curriculum catalogs, reviews, planners, highlighters, label makers, and resources. Meanwhile the laundry calls, the dishes pile up, and the kids are tired. *You* are tired. You are trying to decide how on earth you are going to do it all. Or maybe you are ready to throw in the towel altogether.

Well, take a deep breath. Relax. The One who created the universe in a breath, the One who called you to this journey, is in control. Yes, He is in control of your homeschool. Is anything too hard for Him?

I often forget how small I am and how big God is. It is a funny thing how we think there is no way we can do it all—homeschool our children, be a mom and wife, and perhaps work at home or even outside of the home. We think we need a clone of ourselves or, at the very least, a better system to organize it all. We forget we have the most powerful resource living within us: His power.

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,”

Ephesians 3:20

CHAPTER 1

The Calling

If you are homeschooling, it is because God called you here. Does it make sense that He would call you here and then leave you here alone? No. He walks beside you. He walks in front of you. He is leading the way.

*“I have set the LORD always before me;
Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.”*

Psalm 16:8

I never had any intention of homeschooling. It wasn't on my radar the year that my firstborn turned five years old. So you can imagine my confusion when I walked into the school building to register her for kindergarten and had a panic attack. All of a sudden I felt scared. I was shaking, sick to my stomach, and dizzy. I left the building in a daze. All I could think was, “She is not going here.” I was so confused. Where did this come from? Was it just the jitters of sending a child off to school for the first time? Or was it something more?

As time went on, I knew it was something more. I knew that deep down God was calling me to something different. Everywhere I went, I saw information and resources about homeschooling, met people who homeschooled, or came across articles about homeschooling. It was following me! God was chasing me, and I was running away from Him (as fast as I could).

There was no way I was going to homeschool. It seemed a big task, and I was not organized by nature. I was a messy little girl who was always losing things or forgetting things, and I was just plain disorganized. I was never a great student when I was young. I wasn't a certified teacher. Even more, though, I worried about what people would think of me. (Yes, that ugly sin of pride.) What would our families think?

They were not happy. Even if I wanted to homeschool, I didn't think it was possible. There was serious opposition in my way without support from our families. I didn't want to cause conflict among the people I love or have people think I was just plain crazy. I saw

homeschooling as an impossibility.

“For nothing will be impossible with God.”

Luke 1:37

Over that summer, the verses that continued to speak to me were the ones about pleasing God and not man. I knew that I could not worry about what anyone but God thought of me. His was the only opinion that mattered. Even if I had no one left here on earth supporting me, if I pleased Him, then ultimately that is all that would matter.

Yet it is hard. We want to please our families. We want to please our loved ones and have their support and approval. We don't always want to stick out in a crowd as someone who is doing something *different*. Yet I knew if I followed God and not man, He would take care of the rest. He promises that. I acknowledged that He was in control and He would bless me for obedience.

“Am I now trying to win the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

Galatians 1:10

And He did. Boy, did He ever! I cannot even imagine what my life would be like if I had not obeyed the call. Our family has been blessed beyond measure by homeschooling. It is now a passion of mine. So even when I thought it was impossible, He not only made it possible but also made it surpass my wildest dreams. Isn't He wonderful?

UPDATE — Since the first publication of this book, God has done exceedingly more than I ever imagined. Remember how I wrote that my family was in complete opposition to our homeschooling? Well, just last year, in 2015, my parents boarded a plane to Atlanta to attend a homeschool conference with me and listen to me speak! I gave four presentations at that conference, and they sat in each one.

You can only imagine how surreal it felt as I told how they had opposed the idea of homeschooling but how God has worked in our lives through homeschooling—while my parents were sitting in the audience!

At one point in one of my sessions, I read from a journal that I kept that first year when I was thinking about homeschooling. I didn't even recognize the girl who wrote those words. Scribbled on those pages were all sorts of thoughts and cries to the Lord.

“What if my parents never speak to me again? What if I fail? I don't want to do this, Lord! But I will, because you are calling me, Lord. And I will trust you to work.”

As I read those words, through tears, I looked up to see my parents in the audience, crying. In fact, the entire audience was crying!

It was a moment I will forever cherish. I saw God's plan unfold before my eyes. He truly blessed me for obeying, even though it didn't make sense at the time.

On the ride home from the airport, my mom and I had a moment that was so precious. Through her tears she said, *“I regret so much. I regret that it took all this time for us to support you. I could have been supporting you in the beginning! I'm sorry.”*

I looked her in the eye and said, “There are no regrets. God wanted it this way. If it wasn't so hard and it didn't take 10 years, we wouldn't have this sweet moment.”

God knows. He always knows. His plans are always far better than my own plans.

My story is just that—my story. Everyone has a story. Each story is unique in what He has done for us. Yet at the center of it all, we share something: the calling. He has called us to this wonderful journey with our families. He has called us to educate our children at home, which, as most of us know, is about so much more than just educating them. It is a lifestyle, a way to discipline our children, and a treasure to spend with them those fleeting moments that pass much too quickly.

So think back to when you first began homeschooling. Do you remember the fear? Or perhaps you were thrilled and excited. Or maybe you had no idea what you were getting yourself into. (I sure didn't!) Yet, do you remember God calling you? Did you feel a pull? Were scriptures telling you this was your duty? Was God pointing you in this direction (or dragging you, like He did for me!)?

It is so important to keep those days fresh in our minds and to remember why we are homeschooling. Often, once we get into the swing of things, we let all of the distractions pull at us and we quickly forget how we ended up here in the first place. Ultimately, we are here because God called us here. If you are on this journey, it is simply because He gave you the strength to take that first step.

Take a moment to pray about your goals for your homeschool. Remember why you are here and then ask God to direct your steps in the rest. Write it down. Then, claim a verse for your homeschool. Display it where you can see it easily during the day. Thank God for calling you here, and remember He is the reason you are doing this.

Another option is to write a mission statement for your homeschool. Then, take some time as a family to print it out, write it out, or creatively display it however you want. Hang it in your home and let it be a reminder of why your family is homeschooling, and what your family's goals are for homeschooling. Each family has unique goals, and God has different plans for each family, but ultimately we all are here because He called us to this journey.

These visuals will help keep your focus on Him, especially on those days where you face difficulty. We actually wrote out our family mission statement on a day in which we were all having a hard time.

Attitudes were poor, mommy was tired, and everyone was snippy. There wasn't much motivation for schoolwork. I gathered everyone into our family room to talk about why we homeschool. We talked about how God called us here and how we are going to continue on this journey as long as He continues to lead us. We then came up with a mission statement as a family, printed it out, and hung it on our family room wall. Now we have a constant visual reminder of why we are here.

We need to know that none of us is equipped for this task. Not one. That is the beauty of God's work. He calls us and then He equips us. You don't need to be organized, or a teacher, or perfect. No one is all of those things. Some of us are *none* of those things! Yet, He supplies exactly what we need to complete the tasks that we are given. If He called you to homeschool, He will equip you, but you must rely on Him and not on your own strength. Admit that you are not ultimately in charge.

So many people tell me they could never homeschool. They say that they are not patient enough, disciplined enough, or smart enough. I say, "Neither am I." I never started this thinking, "Oh yes, I am the perfect candidate for this. I am very organized, extremely patient with my kids, and certainly able to spend all day with them and not think it is difficult. I am extraordinarily disciplined and this will be so easy for me!" The truth is that God has supplied me with all that I need to be on this journey and to continue to press on.

Our kids are our ministry. Our homes are our mission field. Just like a missionary going into the jungle, it is hard. Do you think any missionary goes into the field thinking, "This is *so* easy"? No! Neither do we. God supplies missionaries with the strength they need, just as He supplies us, each and every day, in the mission field that we call home.

Just like anyone who is called to any mission in life, we are privileged to educate our children at home. Yes, I said privileged. Even though it can be difficult, isn't that what God promises? He promises to work in the difficulty. When we trust, He works. He works beyond our strength and takes us to places we never could dream of on our own. Remember the calling. There is joy in answering the call.

CHAPTER 2

**Don't Forget Who is
Really in Charge**

Once we lose sight of the fact that our homeschool doesn't really belong to us, and that we are actually not in control of it, we will suffer for it. When we try to do things in our own strength or because we think we can do it alone, we will fail. It is much harder to be in charge. So we need to remember who is really in charge of our homeschool. God is in charge.

When I first began homeschooling, it was surely by divine grace. He called me to do the impossible and He provided the strength that I needed that first year. Yet, here is where the critical mistake was made. The first year went pretty smoothly, and it didn't actually seem so difficult. (It was only kindergarten!) I did have the strength to homeschool. I was thinking, "Wow, I am doing this! I can do it!"

Nope. Wrong.

He was doing it all along. He was providing the strength. He was the one who had made the impossible possible. Yet, I took my eyes off of Him and gave myself credit. Big mistake.

Then, even worse, that summer we were about to embark on our second year of homeschooling. With one year already complete, I was feeling quite confident and started to think I could do even better. I soon became consumed with "stuff"—catalogs, reviews, websites, curriculum fairs, and more. They all called me. There was so much to choose from!

The strong reliance I had on God to initially take the steps into this journey a year earlier was already fading. I was becoming distracted by the now tangible things that I was encountering in the homeschool world. Everything seemed to tell me I could make our homeschool better. All I needed was "XYZ" and I would be more efficient, more organized, and successful. I floundered from one idea to the next. I read all of the information I could get my hands on.

Now, I am very grateful for the enormous amount of information that we have these days as homeschoolers. We are truly blessed to have an incredible volume of resources available to us at any time. But this abundance can build a false sense of security. Beware. Are you forgetting who is in charge?

So often, once we start homeschooling, we quickly become enthralled by all of the information out there. I know in the past few years the information has exploded even more than when I first began homeschooling. At our fingertips, we have information about any and every program out there. The choices are endless, with something to suit every learning style, every budget, and every family.

We are so blessed to have so much available. Not only do we have amazing curricula to choose from, but we also have a huge network of support 24 hours a day and seven days a week. You can find any blog, forum, or group with friends ready to help you with any question you have, or when you just need a shoulder to cry on. I am grateful for that.

We are blessed.

Then there is real-life support. We have co-ops. We have outside activities. We have support groups. We have our network of friends who also homeschool.

We are blessed.

Yet with so much, there is one major caution. Do not replace the One and Only One that we need the most.

God.

He has called us here and He is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine. He is in charge. He is the power source. The mere fact that I am writing this book is testimony that He does the impossible.

Let me explain. A few years into our homeschooling journey, I decided to keep a journal: a blog. I thought this would be a great way to (1) journal our homeschool year and (2) provide a way to witness to others just what we were doing at home. There was still a tension in my family because I homeschooled, and I thought this was a non-confrontational way to show them what we were doing. I could say, “Hey, check out our blog if you want to see what we do all day,” without feeling like I always had to explain what our homeschool really looked like.

As I kept this journal, I realized it renewed a love of writing that I

had when I was younger. Eventually, I found myself writing for a few other online contributor blogs. From these, I gained more exposure for my own blog and eventually changed the focus of my blog altogether to a blog about simplifying all areas of our lives and eliminating the things that distract us from God. My ministry and heart, *Simply Living for Him*, was born.

The blog's purpose was to teach people to have less stuff (physical and mental clutter) and do more (real) things. I always had a desire to simplify and had written a few posts about it. Those posts struck a nerve. It seemed I wasn't the only one desiring a simpler life. In the homeschool community especially, people were feeling bombarded with "stuff" and were looking to simplify homeschool.

Then, in February 2011 I had the privilege to speak about simplifying homeschool at the Heart of the Matter Online Conference. The response was wonderful. Here was little ol' me accidentally homeschooling, blogging, and now speaking about it. I had found my passion. I loved encouraging other homeschool moms in a real and authentic way. I loved connecting with others in the homeschool community.

The next fall I would turn my presentation from the Heart of the Matter Online Conference into a short ebook called *Simply Homeschool: Having Less Clutter and More Joy in Your Homeschool*. I felt led to do this by the Lord. I wasn't sure anybody would read it, but I did it anyway. I started selling it on my website and, much to my surprise, people were buying it.

Here's the funny thing: Looking back on when I wrote that book, I have to chuckle at God's sense of humor. I composed much of that book while staying with my parents during a power outage at our home. We spent several days at my parents' place, and I was typing away much of the time. Here I was with the very people I was afraid of displeasing several years back because they disagreed with homeschooling, and I was writing a book about my journey. In their home. With their approval. God surely showed me that He paves the way when it is His will. He was making possible what was once impossible. It was a true testament to His power working in my life.

The book continued to sell on my site, and a few readers asked if it was available for the Kindle. I hadn't thought about that but decided to give it a try. We made it available for the Kindle so that those few readers could read it—and it remained a top seller at Amazon.com for years, often at #1 for homeschooling ebooks. No marketing plan. No publicity. Just my words and a heart to encourage.

At one point in the middle of all this, I had a long talk with God. I knew I wanted to do whatever His will was for my ministry. I have always seen my blog as a ministry, so I wasn't sure about it being a business. I decided to give some copies away. I truly wanted those who needed encouragement to have it. In a week's time, I gave away more than 2,000 copies. I still couldn't believe so many were interested in the book! My words were being used to encourage so many others, and it truly humbled me and showed me the strength of my awesome God!

The reason I tell you all this is to give glory to God. Do you see what He does when we obey the call? He blesses our efforts. He knows my heart is to encourage others, and He has provided me ways to do so beyond my imagination or ability.

Since then, my ministry and writing and my speaking career have grown by leaps and bounds. I am able to do what I love while serving God. It is a dream come true.

I remember my first big state convention, in my home state. It was the most surreal feeling in the world as I stood at the podium for the first time. Standing there, I had a flashback of myself, a scared mom just starting to homeschool, sitting in that very audience several years back. I could barely catch my breath at the amazing work He has done in my life.

I was a messy little girl who could hardly keep my room straight. I was a lost teenager. I was a college girl living in darkness. I had been in the deepest pit. Then He turned on the light and plucked me right out of the pit. As though that weren't enough, He called me to homeschool, which seemed an impossible task, and He continues to bless those endeavors. Nothing good I've done has anything to do with me. If you look back at my life, none of it makes sense! But His plan always

prevails. I give Him all the glory for anything I have done.

“He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure..”

Psalm 40:2

If He can take this messy little girl and work in my life, He can surely do the same for you.

I have done nothing on my own. He has been in charge the whole time. I just needed to take steps in faith and trust that His plans were better than mine. Once I realized that, it became much easier to homeschool. I knew that I had the Lord on my side. He had called me and He had led me here. He wouldn't leave me here to fail. It was all about Him.

CHAPTER 3

**Vintage Homeschool
—Relying on Him
Alone**

Recently a friend and I had a discussion about a topic we coined “vintage homeschool.” We were referring to the pioneer homeschoolers: those homeschoolers of 30 years ago who paved the way for us today. They didn’t have the Internet. They didn’t have big homeschool conventions or curriculum fairs. They didn’t have Facebook or Pinterest. They might not even have known any other homeschoolers in their area! Can you imagine? I am sure they faced major opposition from their families and friends as well.

Yet, what they did have was all that they needed. God. Those homeschoolers had to fully rely on God for success. They had to remain in Him, commit their homeschools to prayer, and obey His call. They didn’t have the extra distractions that call to us to make things bigger and better. They were just answering the call with God leading the way.

I can imagine the amount of prayer that went into those homeschools. I am sure that when they ventured into such new territory, it was much more difficult than we have it today. There was no choice but to remain in constant prayer and focus on the Lord. They were truly answering the call, not knowing where it would lead.

Do we have that type of faith? Do we pray like that for our homeschools? Are we fully relying on Him above everything else, like they had to?

As a result of those pioneer homeschoolers, we are here today. The homeschool movement has exploded because of their obedience and dedication to doing what God had called them to do, and it continues to grow today. Those families persevered without homeschool conventions. They did it without the Internet. They did it without support groups. They did it perhaps without many friends. They didn’t rely on their own strength but on His.

What if we did that today? What if we took some time and stopped researching every system out there? What if we put away the curriculum catalogs for a bit? What if we just steeped ourselves in His Word each day and covered our homeschools in prayer? Do we have any doubt that we would be successful purely in His strength?

I have done this at times. When I have felt like I am losing sight of the goals for my homeschool or losing sight of God's plan, I have taken a break. I have turned off the computer. I have stopped focusing on ways to improve and instead just focused on God. I spent my time in the Word. I prayed. I asked God to lead my homeschool and to supply all that I needed to be successful in His eyes.

If you feel that you are losing sight of Him or that you are starting to drown in your homeschool, take a break. Give yourself a week, or even a day, to just stop it all and surrender. Ask God to fill you with all that you need.

Unplug. Enjoy your kids. Snuggle up with books. The learning will come. These moments, though, will pass. Don't let them pass by with you being in a constant state of panic over doing homeschool "right." You will do it right if you are focused on God. Set your mind on things above and eternal.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

Hebrews 12:1

Remember those who have walked this road before you. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and they are cheering us on through this journey. God called them. He calls you. Throw off those things that hinder and distract you, and walk ahead in trust and in confidence in His plan.

CHAPTER 4

**Don't Sink! Keeping
Our Eyes on Him**

Let me take a moment to go back to my first year of homeschool. That summer I began to think this homeschooling thing was something I was doing by own strength. I researched every method, every style, and every kind of curriculum out there. I wanted to give my kids the best—and everywhere I looked, another system promised the best.

That next year if things weren't going smoothly or we were having a bad day, instead of turning to Him, I turned to others. Maybe I could find advice from other homeschoolers, either in person or online. I went to find solutions. I invested in planners, organization systems, and more books. If things weren't going smoothly, then I assumed we needed a new system or a different approach to planning.

So out with the old and in with a new. I was truly floundering. Going from one idea to the next was my new "system." I was always thinking, "If I could just get things more organized, it will be smoother." I thought if I could just find a better system, then we would get on track.

The truth is that it is not about the "system." It is about our hearts. Are we fully committed to the Lord's plans, or are we constantly making our own plans? Are we always searching? Worse yet, are we searching outside of Him?

I was completely forgetting to stop and focus on my children's hearts. On my *own* heart. I needed to go to the Bible and seek God's instruction for raising my children.

Once we take our eyes off of God and His plan, we will flounder and eventually sink. Worse, we can drown. I love the Bible passage in which Peter walks on the water. It offers a perfect illustration of what happens to us when we take our eyes off of Him:

And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and

walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Matthew 14:25–32

So here I was in my first few years of homeschooling, screaming out, “Lord save me!” I questioned myself because the abundance of information led me to feel inadequate. I compared myself to others, looked at how others were homeschooling, and began to doubt myself. I even looked into a local Christian school during this time! I was floundering. I became overwhelmed by the daily task of homeschooling and planning homeschooling. I was consumed with wanting to do it better. I felt like I was drowning. My eyes were off of Him.

Interestingly enough, the verses immediately before Peter’s walk on the water tell the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. Imagine seeing Jesus perform this miracle—and notice how quickly it was forgotten. When Peter began to walk on water, imagine his surprise that he was actually doing it! Yet it was not by his strength but by the Lord’s. He was walking on water. The impossible was made possible.

Then the winds came. Just like in our homeschool, things start to get difficult, a storm comes, we see the wind and we become afraid. Peter was afraid of the wind. Or maybe he was startled. Maybe he was startled by the fact that even though he was walking on water through God’s strength, there still was trouble around him. Or perhaps his fear caught him off guard. Regardless, he did take his eyes off of Jesus.

And he sank.

Yet, here is the beauty of this story. Jesus did not leave him there in the water to drown. Jesus and Peter both returned to the boat, and the wind died down. Jesus knows we will stumble and take our eyes off of Him at times. Yet He continues to be there. He does not leave us alone in the water.

Much like Peter, I took my eyes off of Jesus. So many of us do that in homeschooling! I was like the Israelites. I was supplied provision from Him and then quickly forgot what God had done for me just one year earlier. He had made the impossible (in my eyes) possible. He had provided the strength for me to embark on this journey. He had kept His promises. I had obeyed the call and He had provided.

How could I forget so quickly?

Yet, very quickly I replaced Him with the world's view of success, thinking my success would come from the tangible. My success could only come from seeking the eternal, from seeking Him. God called me to homeschool and I quickly forgot I was doing it in His strength.

Imagine how far Peter could have walked on that water if He had not feared when the first wind came. Imagine how far we can go if we keep our eyes on Him, especially when the wind comes. God didn't take the wind away, but He was present there in the wind. We must not fear when storms come, but instead we need to cling tightly to Jesus, who is right beside us, helping us through it.

What is making you sink? It is different for all of us. Some of us just don't feel equipped for this task. Many of us face opposition from husbands, family members, or even our children. Are the days long? Are you floundering each day? Are you walking on water or are you sinking?

Homeschooling is unique in that it is, in a way, ever present—meaning we work in our homes as teachers, yet we are also managing our homes, while being a wife, friend, daughter, mother... The list goes on. We juggle many roles. There isn't much downtime in the homeschooling lifestyle because our work is truly our life.

Yet, when you feel like you can't read another story, do another math problem, or solve another sibling argument, stop. Pray. Remember that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. That is not just a nice phrase. It is God's Word. He says it and He means it. Believe it.

Focus on the here and now. I have often joked that I cannot read through *Frog and Toad* another time, listening painfully to each word

being sounded out ever so slowly after teaching three children to do so. It's tiring! Then, thinking ahead and realizing I still have another who will read *Frog and Toad* to me one day—it's daunting. Yet when I focus on the moment and the things that God has provided me this moment, it is doable. I see my children's smiles. I see their excitement over accomplishments, and I am reminded to take it one step at a time and to enjoy *Frog and Toad*.

As homeschooling moms, it becomes much too easy to get caught up in and tossed around by the wind. We look at everything that is going on around us, and we begin to sink. We need to keep our eyes on Him, for He is the only One who can supply our needs. We need to stop chasing the things of this world and start chasing Him. The joy comes from chasing Him, knowing you are fulfilling the calling and walking the journey that He has planned for you.

CHAPTER 5

**Realize the True
Goals**

So now we ask the question, just what is success as defined for a homeschooler? This is something that each homeschool family must define for itself. I would venture to say, though, that for most of us, success in our homeschool will be defined by the fruit that we bear spiritually.

Do I want my children to ultimately be educated or disciplined? Is it more important for them to be successful financially or spiritually? Do I want them to love the Lord with all their heart, mind, and soul? What will make me feel as though I have succeeded in this calling? Why did God place us on this journey in the first place?

These are all very important questions to address. I fully believe if you are homeschooling, it is because God has called you to homeschool. And if He has called you to homeschool, then your ultimate goal should be to raise children who love Him above all—to disciple children who truly understand what it means to love the Lord with all their heart, mind, and soul. Our goal in homeschooling is to bring God glory and to teach our children about Him.

Whether God has purposed to have my children become CEOs or missionaries (or anything in between), He will see it through. My job is to seek Him and obey Him. His plans will unfold for my children, and those plans may be very different from my dreams for them. Ultimately, I have to let my children be the individuals that God has called them to be—not who I want them to be, and not to be like the person down the street.

That little five-year-old girl that I was terrified to homeschool will finish her homeschooling journey in just two short years. It blows my mind. When we look toward next steps for her after her high school years, we continue to tell her that wherever God takes her is where we want her to be. In my mama heart, I want my daughter here at home forever. I want to convince her it would be best to attend college locally and stay home, but I know that God's plans for her are best and ultimately I want her to follow His leading. That is what this whole journey has been about for us.

So if she chooses to stay at home and attend community college

because God leads her to, that will be wonderful! If He leads her around the world, then that will be amazing, too. Even when it is difficult, we must trust that the Lord is in control.

We can get so caught up in the academics that we lose sight of our true purpose. Of course, academics are important, but I would rather my children know the Lord above all else and live for Him than be able to compute any difficult mathematical problem. I trust that if He wants them to use their gifts and abilities for big academic purposes, He will make that happen. I also trust if He has plans for them that don't include big academic purposes, then He knows best. Seek Him, and He will make known His plans for our children.

“The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.”

Proverbs 16:9

God has called us to homeschool so that we can raise up the next generation to be a godly generation. If we are not clear on the ultimate goal of this journey, then it is more difficult to stay focused. We will flounder and too easily get distracted, for instance, when we spend countless hours researching which math program to use. Stop and remember the goal! Are we focused on raising godly children, trusting God's plan for their lives, or are we placing so much emphasis on the perfect math program that we have forgotten to be in the Word today, pray as a family, and ask God to lead us?

Are we focused on how our homeschool looks? I often worry about the amount of emphasis we can place on our homeschool rooms or how things look. God doesn't care what our homeschool looks like. He cares about what our hearts look like. He cares about what our children's hearts look like. Don't spend countless hours on making things look just so. Spend countless hours with Him discerning the true goals for your children and your family.

Are we focused on making our kids look good, which in turn makes us feel successful? Or are we focusing on their hearts? God knows our hearts and our children's hearts, and no test score can override that. We must start with their hearts and ours. We must not be caught up in what others construe as success. Our goals come from the Lord and what

He has called us to do. We work for an audience of One.

Once we have our goals defined and we are focused on those goals, there is actually freedom– freedom from answering to anyone but the Lord. We know that He will not leave us or forsake us on this journey. That does not mean we won't make mistakes. (Oh boy, have I made mistakes on this journey!) Yet God is sovereign and those mistakes will still be used for good. They will be used to grow us. With our eyes focused on God-given goals and true success, there is no fear if we make a mistake. We know it is for a purpose.

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose..”

Romans 8:28

Again, it is helpful to write out your goals. Keep them at the forefront of your mind. Pray over them each day and ask the Lord to help you not to forget. Define yourself by success in His eyes rather than in the world's eyes.

CHAPTER 6

**How Does Letting
Him Lead Look on a
Daily Basis?**

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Matthew 6:33

When we learn to live out Matthew 6:33—really live it out—we have nothing else to rely on but Him. We must seek Him first. Not ourselves. Not our plans. When we seek Him first, then His plans become our plans. His will becomes our will.

My will and my plan was to send my children to school. There wasn't even a thought that we would homeschool. Yet here I am, and I can't imagine being anywhere else.

His plan became my plan after a long, hard summer of seeking Him and ultimately surrendering to Him fully. I prayed, read scripture, and focused on Him. I let Him lead, even though it seemed impossible.

God gives us many resources in our lives to use with wisdom and discernment, but not to take the place of Him. We must commit it all to Him first and let Him lead. So often we think we control everything.

As homeschooling moms, we do have a great responsibility to our children in educating them. Yet, the problem is when we think that the responsibility solely relies on us. If God called us to do this, He most certainly isn't going to leave us here floundering. He will equip us for every good work. We must claim His words and live these truths.

When we pray for our curriculum choices or how our schooling will look, we do not need to make choices and then ask Him to bless those choices. We do not need to make choices and ask Him to confirm them. No, we need to start simply by praying, getting close to God, being in the Word, and spending lots of quiet time with the Lord.

His Word is transforming. The more we fill up on His Word, the more we will be sure we are walking with Him and living out His will. For instance, how many times have you decided to use a certain plan for your schooling and then prayed to ask God if it was the right choice? Or did you decide on a co-op and then ask God to bless the choice that you already made?

I say we need to start by being in relationship with Him like no other. Waking up with Him, conversing with Him all day and night—that is what praying without ceasing is. It is a relationship with Him so that your life is in constant union with Him.

Being in His Word is not something we *do*; it is something we *live*. We need to let His Word transform us. The Bible says His Word is alive and active. It is powerful. It is not merely a book of rules, instructions, or words. It is life. It is life changing. It transforms.

When we are steeped in the Word, we are transformed. As we pray and meditate on the Lord, we are filled with His Spirit. When we have this type of relationship with the Lord, His will becomes our will.

We often want to know what God's will is for our lives. Yet, we only have this moment, and God only reveals this moment to us, so perhaps He does not want us to look too far ahead. He wants us to simply seek Him first without conditions and without trying to figure out the future details. He knows the outcome.

It all begins with Matthew 6:33. Seek first His righteousness... He knows what we need. We do not need to go to Him and ask for what we want or ask Him to bless what we want. We only need to seek Him, which we do by praying, by reading the Word, by *living* it.

When we seek Him first, He will provide for all of our needs, including our homeschool needs. If we seek relationship with Him above all, we do not need to fear that our needs won't be met. They will be met beyond our expectations.

So change the way you are thinking about your homeschool. Instead of spending countless hours researching the best curriculum, styles, and activities and then praying about which ones to choose, start with just praying. Don't have an agenda in your mind; let God reveal His agenda to you. As you pray and become closer to God, you will understand more clearly what He wants for you.

Spend time with the Lord. How can we have a relationship with someone if we don't spend time with Him? How can we expect to know Him if we don't converse with Him? How can we truly love someone

and not stick close to Him?

We are talking about the God who created the universe. Who created you. Who created me. He lifted me straight out of the pit of darkness that I was living in and He rescued me. He placed me into the Light. I am a new creation. Yet, I have the audacity to make excuses for not spending time with Him. I am nothing without Him. I exist because of Him. My eternity depends on Him.

I am being transparent here because I know that is what I need to do if I am to be an encouragement. It is shameful to me, but I know I let it happen too easily. I used to make so many excuses: “I am too tired. I don’t have enough time. I am too busy.”

Oh, how that grieves me.

I had everything backward. I thought doing everything my way was first, and then I gave my leftover time and attention to God. It often sounded something like this: “Well, I will pray when I am done with these chores” or “I will read my Bible after I check my email.” Yet, I would want God to still bless all of my efforts. It was backward. I wasn’t seeking Him first and trusting Him to provide. I was seeking Him after I had exhausted all of my own efforts.

How can we even allow those thoughts? The truth is, Satan knows we like to be busybodies so he tricks us into thinking we are too busy for our God. He tricks us into thinking we can do things in our own strength. He tricks us into putting ourselves above God. Just like in the garden, he finds a way to twist the Truth and deceive us. He makes us think we are too busy for God. Too tired.

Are. You. Kidding. Me.

If I dare say to my God that I am too tired for Him, my faith is dead. My faith *depends* on Him. I live, breathe, and fill up on Him every moment. Without Him, I am dead.

So, with that being said, I was convicted. I was ashamed. Since then I have changed my priorities. I don’t see my time with the Lord as something to check off my list or as something I have to do. You see, the

closer you get to God, the more time you want to spend with Him. You can't get enough. You depend on Him for breath. For life.

Yes, at times that slithery serpent creeps back in. I slip back, and I put other things above my God. It is a constant battle. That's why it is so important to recognize the battle and continue to fight.

We need to examine our hearts and our relationship with the Lord. Are we spending time with Him because we want to or because we have to? Are we submitting to Him out of love? Or fear? We need to come to the place where we realize that our everything is dependent on Him; then, and only then, can we begin to let Him lead us daily—including in our homeschools.

When we make decisions we often get so stuck on the choices. Is this God's will? Is this the right thing? Is this best for my child? While we need to be wise and discerning in our decisions, we ultimately must realize that if we are walking closely with God, we are more likely to be in His will.

I begin each day with the prayer, "Lord, help me to teach the children what You want them to learn. Help me to learn what You want me to learn. Give me the strength to do it."

Another way to let the Lord lead is by making the Bible a priority in your family. We don't open a single textbook until we have read the Bible together. There was a time when I would push the Bible aside until math was finished or until our chores were complete. I thought that we would have time later, after everything else was finished.

Again, it's about priorities. What kind of example do I set for my children, let alone myself, if we don't put Him first? No matter how busy our day is now, we don't do anything until after Bible time. We usually read a devotional book or some Bible passages, and then sing worship songs together. This sets the tone for the day and aligns our focus on Him.

Then after lunch, before we resume school, we read the Bible. We pray together and turn our hearts toward Him. It helps us pray about any situations that have arisen that day and to regroup for the afternoon. Of

course, we also turn to the Bible during the day whenever the need arises, if we are facing a difficult situation or simply want to offer praise. This year we have begun an even deeper Bible study together as a family. You will read more about that in chapter 9.

Another very important suggestion is to find other homeschooling friends to pray with. Whether it is daily or weekly or whatever frequency works for you, it can be transforming. By implementing this practice in my own life, I've been strengthened by a few ladies who have become so dear to my soul through our get-togethers. We gather weekly and allow our kids to play, but then we also pray together. This is integral in remembering to let God lead us as homeschoolers.

CHAPTER 7

The Comparison Trap and Expectations

This chapter centers around a topic I have talked about often, and I will continue to do so because I feel it is such a hindrance in homeschooling. It is the ugly comparison trap: the measuring of your own homeschool against others. It needs to stop. It is completely contrary to letting God lead us.

As we do in many areas of life, we often measure ourselves against others. God does not tell us to do this. We are to measure our worth in Him. Our identity is in Him, our value is in Him, and our success is defined by Him, not by others.

The comparison trap is too easy to fall into these days because of the abundance of information on the Internet and in magazines, books, etc. It is especially easy to fall into if we are not confident in our homeschool in the first place. If we are in that place where we aren't truly letting God lead us, then we are looking at things in an earthly way. We are defining our success based on others' successes.

The truth is what works for someone else might not work for you. Or it might. But that doesn't matter. What truly matters is whether you have answered the call and submitted your homeschool to Him. If He is pleased with your efforts, then that is all that matters. God did not call you to homeschool so that your homeschool can look like the neighbor's down the street. Your homeschool is unique to your family. He has determined how your homeschool should look, so if you let Him lead you, you can be assured you are successful. When we rely on what others are doing, it is coveting someone else's life. Once again, we are not relying on Him.

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”

Colossians 3:23

We tend to look to others because it is so very easy to do so these days. All over the Internet are blogs with people's stories and we think they have the perfect family, perfect homeschool, and perfect life. There

are two problems with this attitude. First, as sisters in Christ, we should rejoice when others are doing good things and not let the sin of jealousy rear its very ugly head. Second, we should remember that no one is perfect on this earth, and whatever we see is usually the result of “cleaning up” appearances for all to see. As long as we are being real and authentic, it is perfectly acceptable (desirable, in fact) to share the good stuff and the bad.

As a writer I don’t want to always write negatively, so more often I share the good lessons I am learning. I don’t enjoy wallowing. I don’t think it benefits anyone to be a complainer. I want to be edifying. So keep that in mind. The person who is writing has the intention of encouraging the reader, so naturally he or she will share the good stuff and what is working.

Yet, there has to be a balance so that readers know things aren’t always smooth sailing. My most popular post to date was when I published one of our worst weeks ever in our homeschool and titled it “The Other Side of Homeschool.” I posted the ugly details, complete with pictures. I felt it was necessary to be encouraging and to see that even in a terrible week, God works. He uses the bad for good. He shapes us through trials. Sharing the struggle is important as long we see that God works through the struggle.

So always read with a discerning eye. Look to others for ideas and support, but do not rely on what others are doing or, worse, what others think. Don’t base your worth on what anyone else is doing. As homeschool moms, we do ourselves a huge favor when we are truly real and authentic with one another, sharing the ups and downs with the overall goal of supporting each other, lifting each other up and encouraging each other, but not measuring up against each other.

Another trap is when we compare ourselves to others and we set up false expectations for our homeschool. I remember when I was in the “always planning and never doing” stage, and I realized that I was really just living for the expectation, instead of the moment. I wasn’t enjoying my homeschool in the present because I was waiting for what it *would* be when I had all of my planning complete. God only promises today. Enjoy the moment, and don’t live your life based on an expectation.

There is so much freedom in homeschooling because we can tailor our children's education to suit their needs. In a school setting, there is always comparison. There are standardized tests and peer pressure. At home we are free. We are free to set aside all those hindrances and focus on our unique calling as a family. Don't sabotage that freedom by looking to others. Look to the only One who matters—God. Enjoy your freedom as the unique homeschooling family God has created you to be.

CHAPTER 8

Be Prepared for Bad Days

We all know the Bible passage about the house built on the sand. We must be building our homeschool based on God as our foundation, so when the storms come we will not be destroyed.

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it..”

Matthew 7:24–27

By doing the things laid out in this book—remembering who is in charge, surrendering your homeschool to Him, keeping your eyes on Him, and staying in constant communion with Him—we will be strengthening our foundation. We all know that bad days will come in life and in homeschool, so we must be prepared.

We have so much to do each day that when we stop and think about all of the tasks we have, we can very quickly get overwhelmed. We must run on Holy Spirit energy and not on our own strength or intentions.

Expect bad days. Know that the Lord uses everything to grow us. Be prepared by building your foundation on Him and His Word so when times get tough, you will stand strong. Choose to see God’s purpose in those days. What can you learn from them?

When your children see that Mommy turns to God when things are rough, then you set an example for them to follow as they grow. Where do we turn when things are hard? Turn to Him. Do your children see you praying when there is a tough situation? Do they see you on your knees

submitting to His will each day? Point to Him in every situation. Let God lead you, and let your children see that example.

Let Him lead you through the rough waters as well as the calm seas. Trust His plan for it all. I've had so many days where I felt like I could scream. (At times I even did!) We all do. Yet it is neither wise nor acceptable for us to stay in that place. God promises us we will have troubles in this world. If we didn't, we would have no need to rely on Him.

Consider it joy when He uses trials to grow us. We have the opportunity to grow closer to Him through it. Homeschooling is not always easy. Nothing is. Like those missionaries in the jungle that I mentioned in chapter 1, there are challenges. Surrender those days to Him.

Prepare yourself by keeping a list of “fighter” verses. Put on that armor of God to prepare you. At the end of this book, you'll find a list of 31 verses for your homeschool. You can meditate on a different one each day of the month. They can help you focus daily.

Remember that whenever we are doing something for the glory of God, Satan will try to take us down. Prepare ahead of time. We will experience attack because the enemy hates that we homeschool. We must be prepared for the attacks, and not be surprised or blindsided by them; rather, welcome them as a chance for your family to grow even closer to God.

I find if I wake up late and do not get into the Word before my children wake, it sets me up for a poor heart. My immediate focus is on me and not on Him: thoughts like “I need my coffee” or “I'm tired” tend to dominate my morning. I have to fight to wake up and get going before my children, but when I do I am much better prepared.

As I wrote in an earlier chapter, we will make mistakes. Expect them. Don't be surprised by them. Rejoice in the fact that God uses them. Do not let mistakes defeat you; rather let them push you to see God's hand in all situations. Teach your children through mistakes. Let them see how you handle tough times or even decisions that didn't work out as expected. Most of all, use them as an opportunity to point your children

to Him.

If children don't make mistakes, they will grow up thinking they will never fail. Failure always produces perseverance. It is OK to fail, as long as we use it for learning and growth. It also helps us to further rely on God. So be prepared for the storms. They will come. Just make sure your foundation is built on the rock.

CHAPTER 9

Using the Bible as Our Main Textbook

At the time of this book's first publication, I had a new leading from the Lord for the future of my family's homeschool that I wanted to share with you. It all began with a statement made by Mark Hamby of Lamplighter Publishing at a homeschool convention at which he and I were both speakers. He made a statement during one of his presentations that has stuck with me ever since. He stated that if he could do it all over again, he would put away the textbooks for one year and solely study the Bible.

The reason this idea was so appealing to me was that I could only imagine the transformation that would take place in our family if we were in the Bible several hours a day. I wasn't sure how we would do this, but the idea kept coming back to me.

"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

Psalm 127:1

I want our studies to flow from His Word. It is the most important book to know in life. It is where our education starts. I firmly believe God can work an amazing transformation in our family if we devote our studies to His teaching and always seek first His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

So currently I am working on how all this will look. We will go through Genesis, really digging into the Word, breaking it down, and learning. We will also use it for science, geography, and history. We will all work together each morning for however long it takes to truly study the Word. We don't just want to hear it; we want to actively take it in and study it. To know it. To know God.

From there, I have individual work for each child. We will do math and language arts separately but will also add in other assignments all based on our studies. Copywork will be from Scripture. Our research projects or language lessons can all be taken from our lessons in the Word, as well as history, science, and geography.

Here are some reasons I am excited about these new Bible study plans:

- Having my family centered in the Bible each day. How can we go wrong if we are all studying God’s Word as a family? What an amazing opportunity to grow together as a family.
- Letting God lead all of our studies. He *is* the best resource we have and the ultimate source of wisdom. He will lead not only our Bible studies, but also our academic studies.
- Enjoying activities for all ages. Starting with Genesis means we can take advantage of so many learning opportunities for the different age groups. My oldest daughter can delve into the plants and animals created by God, contrast evolution vs. creation, understand Adam’s sin and the fall of man, study the true historical facts of Noah’s ark, and study ancient maps. The younger ones can do these things on their own level.
- Discovering what I can learn. Learning alongside my children is wonderful. I know God will be teaching me just as much through this process.
- Discipling my children. Discipleship starts at home. Learning as a family how to truly study the Word is far more important than learning it elsewhere.
- Following Matthew 6:33. Truly seeking Him first in all we do, especially in our education, is of utmost importance.
- Giving my children a strong foundation for their spiritual life. What a beautiful inheritance to gain biblical wisdom!

“The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.”

Psalm 16:6

- Watching the kids discover their worth is found in Him. I want my children to know God—to truly know Him. By knowing Him, they will know that their worth comes only from Him. Growing up knowing that

truth is a huge goal of mine, especially as I have a daughter entering those oh-so-tough middle school years. I don't want them ever to doubt that their identity lies anywhere else but in Him and what He has done.

This is exciting for so many reasons, but most of all... How can I expect us to know God's will if we don't know God? So, I am following His leading in this and expecting to be transformed.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 1:7

We must know God above all, and then we will be truly wise.

UPDATE — Since original publication, we did use the Bible as our main textbook for one year. It was truly amazing! You can read all about that experience on my website Bible Based Homeschooling (www.biblebasedhomeschooling.com), and there is even a free ebook explaining how we did everything. It was, by far, our most amazing homeschool year.

CHAPTER 10

**Now Let Go and Let
Him Lead!**

As I wrote this book, I prayed diligently. I prayed for the words that God wanted me to write and for the ones God wanted to hear those words. I would often lay in my bed each morning thinking about those who would read this book. I prayed over each of you, knowing God knows the details.

Only He can be the One to lead you. Only He can be the One to give you the strength. Only He can be the One to meet all of your needs.

I pray that before you go one day further in your journey as a homeschooling family, you put away all of the “stuff” that has been distracting you. If you are overwhelmed and gearing up for another year, stop everything. Stop the planning. Stop the researching. Stop. Take at least one day, but preferably several, and go to Him. Plan a retreat, just to commit to praying for your homeschool. Pray with your husband. Pray as a family. Tell God your fears. Don’t try to find the answers yet. Don’t look for signs or seek others’ advice. He just wants you to trust, knowing full well that He already has your needs met.

He’s got this.

You don’t have to feel confident. You don’t have to be Super Mom. You merely need to be ready to sit at His feet and listen. Be like Mary, not Martha. Remember what Jesus said to Martha:

“But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.’”

Luke 10:41–42

When we spend too much time on the details, we miss out on the true teacher in all of this: God. He is teaching our families. He is in charge. Sit at His feet awhile and just listen.

Jesus says that Mary had chosen what was better, and what could not be taken from her. Exactly. The things Martha was chasing were temporal. They were details. Earthly things. Mary chose the eternal: Jesus.

Choose the same for your homeschool. Choose to chase Him, not

the world.

Go to the Word. Read the Scripture and let Him speak. Don't try to figure out what's ahead. Just be still. Listen. Embrace His Words. Let Him embrace you. After you have done these things, rest in Him, knowing that He is in charge. Seek Him first before seeking the earthly. Then He will show One who called you...and you will experience the joy that is awaiting you, in being called you what you are to do on this earth.

So let go, and let Him lead. He knows the outcome. We only need to trust in His plans. No matter what they are, He is in control and knows what is best. He will lead you if you simply surrender and listen.

I pray the calling to be a homeschooling family blesses you as you focus on Him, the home.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:1–2

APPENDIX

31 Days of Praying for Your Homeschool

VERSES FOR THE
HOMESCHOOLING FAMILY

31 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR YOUR HOMESCHOOL WHILE SEEKING FIRST HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS

Welcome to 31 Days of Prayer for Your Homeschool. As homeschooling families, we must cover our homeschools in prayer. It is necessary if we are to succeed. If we seek Him first above all else in our homeschools, we will be on the right path.

Commit to using this guide for 31 days. Read one verse each day. Mediate on it. Pray over it, and see how it applies to homeschool. Read it as a family if you wish. Better yet, write it down somewhere prominent for the whole family to see. Let His Word penetrate the heart of your homeschool.

We must seek His will diligently each day. Covering our homeschools in prayer will keep our hearts and our homeschools turned toward Him.

If you do this for 31 days, I am hopeful that it will become not just an act for those 31 days, but a lifelong commitment to praying for your homeschool.

As homeschool moms we need to fight off so many battles from the enemy-the world, and sometimes ourselves. Choose today to fight those battles with His Word.

I originally included the text to all the verses in the first copy of 31 Days of Praying for Your Homeschool. I have updated it to just include the verse reference so that YOU can look it up in the translation of your choice and write it out and then pray about it for your homeschool. Use the spaces to write the verse or your thoughts.

I fully believe we, as women, need to be equipped in His Word before we can begin to teach it to our children. I encourage you to let His Word transform you!

Blessings and Joy,
Karen

For more encouragement about simplifying, visit me at my website:
www.simplylivingforhim.com

Prayer Journal and Notes

My greatest desire for all who will read this book is that they would become closer to the Lord through His Word. There is no teacher above Him and no greater book to learn from than the Bible.

I would encourage you to use the following pages to spend time alone with Him and journal what you are learning. Or perhaps you would like to discuss it with others in a group setting, reflecting on what you have learned from Him. Yet, never let others replace what only HE can teach you.

My desire is for every woman to be a woman in the Word walking closer to God everyday. May my words point you to Him, and Him alone.

The homeschool journey is just a small part of discipling our families. Never let homeschooling become something bigger than that. It is not a means to an end, but a small part of a much bigger journey.

Blessings and Joy,

Karen

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen DeBeus is a homeschooling mom to four children who is passionate about encouraging homeschooling families. She is an author, speaker, and founder of the Simply Living for Him Retreat. She desires to live more simply so that she can keep her focus and her family's focus on Jesus. She has been brought to her knees many times by the grace God has given her, and she writes about her journey to simplify all areas of her life at her blog, Simply Living for Him.

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