

How Do We Prepare Our *Youth Girls*

For the Future?

by Helen Leibee

Occasionally my husband and I, others at our church, or the tape ministry will receive letters asking us how we prepare our born-again young ladies for their futures. These letters are often asking if we send our girls to universities, to Bible colleges, to seminaries, etc. With currently twelve youth thirteen years and up living in our home, and numerous others in the past, we have spent much time in prayer and practical application on this area. I will try to answer the question from our own experience. I am sure there are others who could add much wisdom to the subject. This is just one family's perspective.

Young converted girls in the home bring so much joy, vitality, and sweetness to the home. They are wonderful helpers, companions, prayer warriors, and en-

couragers! They teach *us now!* Yet their days of training are not over. Just as many people in the world will spend a fortune training their youth in colleges, we still want to invest our time, love, and prayers in the continuing of our young peoples' preparation for life!



Rick & Helen Leibee family

They are a treasure and the future Kingdom of God, should Jesus tarry.

It seems that in Titus when instructions are given as to how to train young women, we are to train them AS IF they are going to marry and bear children. We know that some women are called to serve God in a single state, and we want our girls to be content in whichever state God chooses for them. We explain to our girls that there is a possibility marriage will not be their future. We also explain that training in that direction will still be very beneficial. Should they remain single, they will still operate in the same “realm” in many ways: in a home with their parents or a sibling; helping a family on the mission fields; working at a Christian residential home for the disabled, orphaned or elderly, etc. God has a wonderful plan to use each of these young women for the furtherance of the Kingdom.

Homemaking

So we seriously set out to train them in homemaking: the everyday tasks of keeping a home, being self-sufficient (as far as having the ability to sew, cook, can and garden), making the home a tidy, simple haven reflecting Jesus and not the world’s tastes. This takes up much of their time and these are fun lessons. (By now my girls are better than me at most of these tasks so they are no longer lessons, just lots of practice sprinkled with words of advice.) It is such a blessing when the girls find joy in these everyday tasks—it will add grace and beauty to their future homes. When the mother in a home delights in her duties, it gives an air of contentedness.

Childtraining

We guide them in the ways of childtraining: lovingly guiding children, teaching them God’s truths, and disciplining. We daily stop to point out to the older girls the very subtle, often unnoticed moments of training. We call them aside and explain why we are working on a particular sin or habit in someone’s life and what the outcome would be if it went

undealt with. We show them scriptures, expose them to tapes, let them hear our hearts on the applications, and acknowledge our failures. We are open with them concerning difficult training issues and speak to them about loving discipline, even occasionally taking them in to watch how we handle chastening. Although we encourage them to listen to tapes or to read *The Pursuit of Godly Seed*, we still think that watching the application and seeing the victories and failure in their own home is the most effective.

Helping in Other Homes

Occasionally our girls have the privilege of helping out in other homes. This exposes them to other godly women and to other ways of running a household. We do not want them inflexible, thinking our way is the only way. In fact, I enjoy discussing their time with them when they return because *I* continue to learn as well!

Receiving Correction

In addition to the homemaking side, we continue to work very diligently on the spiritual side. One area is receiving correction. At this age we work very hard at getting the girls to a point where they GREATLY DESIRE that any sin or failing which they have been pointed out to them. We are setting them up so that they will be teachable and ready when a husband, minister or other authority in their lives comes to them to rebuke or to give counsel. We believe we live in an age where young people (all people?) are not being taught that at all. Often any form of

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rebuke, whether it be in person or from the pulpit, is received with offensiveness, hurt, denial, etc., in the world and even in the churches. We are trying to train our young people that we have nothing to fear in admonishment and often much to gain. By the time our young people are around fifteen years old, they actually come

often asking us to shine a light on some area of their lives. It is not uncommon for us to get a note or hear from them in person something along this line: “You haven’t come to me in a while about anything specific in my life. Please, if you see anything that is not pleasing to the Lord, come and point it out to me. I so want to grow and be more like Him.” They are sincere in their requests; they desire input and receive reproof with gratitude. Praise the Lord. This is more exciting than a college level course in “Ethics”.

How We Handle Offenses

Related to this same area, we have noticed in this age that within churches, businesses and families there is a great tendency for people to get hurt or offended over small things. How we handle offenses is so important. We spend time in these later years helping our young people with the true working out of the scripture, “*Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.*” Psalm 116:165.

Many offenses come from speculating that someone meant or said or simply implied something which is derogatory towards us personally or which puts us in a not-so-good light. We first try to train by word and example that we should simply give grace and assume that we are probably perceiving wrong (because we should think the best of people, especially the brethren). In addition, we try to humble ourselves and realize that truly we do have many faults and there may be a measure of truth in what the person thinks about us. Thirdly, we try to help them understand that even if someone is completely wrong, we must realize how many times in this life we have done something wrong that no one saw or noticed; therefore it certainly does us very little harm for the good parts of our character or personality to also go unnoticed sometimes! Or for us to be misunderstood.

Oh, you may think these are little things, but so many wives are nervous and overly sensitive because they are so

often offended. They can save many years of useless tears, hurts, strivings, and counseling sessions! And give more time for ministering and caring for others. God’s way is so different from man’s way and so beautiful!

A Meek and Quiet Spirit

We train our girls to be quiet and meek, not to stand out in a crowd. It actually goes against most of our natures to be gentle and calm. In our flesh we like to be the

center of attention—to be noticed—to be the prettiest or the most talented or the smartest. Today’s society pushes girls to the forefront in these areas. It is sometimes done subtly (writing long holiday newsletters bragging on the children’s every achievement) and sometimes not so subtly (talent shows and beauty contests.) We want to teach the young women God’s way of a meek and quiet spirit. One that loves Jesus and wants His name exalted.

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Not to Fear Man

While training them to be meek and quiet we also train them NOT to fear man and not to be afraid of sharing about Jesus. We set up opportunities for them to die to self as far as shyness. We gather with other families and have them give reports on assigned themes, etc. We give them opportunity for door-to-door evangelism (in groups) in the inner city. They do this in a supporting role rather than a leading role.

Minister to the Hurting and the Widow

We encourage the girls to minister to the hurting and the widow. They often write notes of love, spend

time in prayer or deliver meals or gifts. I wish we did it even more often!

Study the Bible

We encourage our young people in a comprehensive study of the Bible. I am so thankful that my husband teaches the children from the Bible for years on end, having studies and discussions of specific books of the Bible from the time they are little until the day they leave home. Some days we miss it. Some days we get together twice and some days once. Sometimes we read missionary books or other spiritual books. But over the years there have been hours and hours of Bible teaching and oh how these add up in our young people's minds and hearts. In addition we have the privilege of being at a church where the Word of God is taught in Spirit and truth. The sermons and other messages are kept on file at our tape ministry and so there are years of topics for the growth of the soul. Occasionally our youth will study a series of tapes from the past on soul winning, or fasting. Sometimes they may study methods of reaching Muslims. There is much availability to the Word in person and on tape. But primarily the young people diligently seek the Word themselves during these important years.

Missionary Medical Intensive

Around the age of twenty, we allow our boys and our girls to take part in a weeklong twelve-hour day intensive course called "Missionary Medical Intensive." For a girl this prepares her to be a helpmeet should her husband spend time on the mission field. Or it enables her to help a missionary family or work in a mission clinic. At the end of the course there is a section on emergency midwifery. The textbooks are a tremendous resource for the future and are written by Christian MD's. Not all of our youth will take this course. It depends on their vision and circumstances.

Advanced Missionary Training

Occasionally some of our church girls have attended a three-week Advanced Missionary Training course in North Carolina. It has proven valuable to many a future missionary. We would only recommend very consecrated girls and then only in groups so as to encourage and sustain them in a pure walk with the Lord. Should one of our daughters court a man who is headed to the mission field, we would likely send her in a group to this course if that were the desire of her future husband.

Love the Lord Jesus Fervently

Before our children leave home we want them to love the Lord Jesus fervently. We want them to have a firm mindset that they are ready and very willing to die for the cause of Christ. It is with much prayer and teaching; much exposure to the writings on the martyrs and dedicated (*dedicated* not *glamorized*) missionaries; and many hours of discussion. We watch for that turning point that seems, to the best of our discernment, to be a true dedication to that end.

Those are a few of our ideas on preparing godly young women. Do not be overwhelmed by it. It is *our* list, not *yours*. And it is worked at over a long span of their youth which can be anywhere between five and ten years depending on your definition of youth and how long they are in the home. And it is a joy. It is bathed in prayer and sought after in faith that it is Jesus Christ who enables us and it is His presence in their lives that makes them into tools for His use. We are not always *guiding* these girls. Oh no. We are working side by side with them and daily learning things from them that make us more conformed to His image. May the Lord continue to lead us all as we serve Him together. □

Train up a "youth" in the way "she" should go:
and when "she" is old, "she" will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6