

Let Us Not Grow Weary

By Sharon Grimes

There is a strange phenomenon taking place in home school circles today -- have you noticed? New home schoolers just keep getting younger and younger! It is not unusual, when speaking at a home school convention, to find myself addressing a roomful of home school mothers that are young enough to be my daughters. There is an entirely new generation of home schoolers at hand, an increasing percentage of whom were home schooled themselves. Now, that's exciting!

I can almost see you shaking your head and thinking, "Doesn't she realize that home schoolers aren't getting younger, but she is getting older?!??" Okay, I admit it -- I am getting older! I was twenty-seven years old when we started home schooling our oldest child...way back in 1983! Do your math, and you will figure out that I will be turning FIFTY this year.

Lest you think that this milestone birthday must mean that we are done with our home schooling and now enjoying grandchildren, let me assure you that you would be quite incorrect! Yes, our oldest child is now twenty-seven, but our youngest child has just turned nine. Assuming he graduates at the age of eighteen, we will be graduating our youngest from "home school" in the year 2016. That will mark the culmination of 32 academic years of home schooling for the Grimes family. Whew!

Truth be told, this is quite a different outcome than where we started. We initially home schooled because we couldn't afford Christian school tuition. However, after several years of watching God work in our lives as a result of home schooling, our initial preference became a strong conviction that He had chosen this narrow path for us, and we were to continue walking in it. We have learned that "home schooling" doesn't begin with phonics and end with calculus thirteen years later. It doesn't start at 8 a.m. and end at 3p.m. for 180 days of the year. Home schooling is a life-long process, filled with correcting, coaching and mentoring our children from the time they are born until the time they leave our homes. And, even after our children have left the four walls of our home, we are still to play an important role in their adult lives by providing godly counsel and wisdom.

How I longed for an older woman to give me counsel and assistance when we started home schooling twenty-two years ago! Now, I am the older woman who is commanded to teach the younger. Can I be entirely truthful with you and admit that I am "feeling my age?" I no longer have the energy and endurance I once did; my memory is reliant on my "paper brain" (my day timer); and I feel somewhat "stretched" as a mom trying to prayerfully support and meet the needs of six children in all different ages and stages of their lives.

Sadly, I am witnessing veteran home schoolers all across the country decide they are too worn out to continue on. They have placed their children in public and private schools and gone on to have their own career. Some of these are close friends who, at one time, stood shoulder to shoulder with me as we worked to secure home school freedoms in our state. What happened?

They grew weary in well-doing.

The apostle Paul admonished us in Galatians 6:9, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." I admit, it is easy to grow weary when your days are filled with diapers and laundry and dirty dishes and school lessons and little ones waiting to be picked up -- and your nights are void of sufficient sleep! It is easy to grow weary when you are teaching life skills such as cooking and driving and sewing and home maintenance, and trying to figure out how to teach an algebra or chemistry lesson. Add in music lessons, home school sports, field trips, and other support group activities, and you may end up feeling totally overwhelmed. I know, because I have been at that very point not just once, but many times.

Let me share an important truth that I have discovered along my home school journey: I cannot home school in my own strength!! God's mercies are new every morning, and great is His faithfulness! (Lamentations 3:23) I truly believe we need to begin each day by opening our eyes and heart and finding ourselves in agreement with God as we cry out, "God, I can't get through this day on my own! I need you today! I need you every hour! I need you every minute!" King David acknowledged the source of his strength in Psalm 121: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth."

Our strength comes from spending time with God in prayer, and reading His Word, claiming His promises for the day. Meditate on His Word throughout the day; place Scripture verses all throughout your home to serve as a continual reminder that you are not alone in your efforts. Stay in a continual attitude of prayer throughout the day, for Jesus told us to "watch and pray." It isn't enough just to teach our children to walk circumspectly; we also need to continually hedge them in with our prayers. We must not grow weary spiritually, or every other aspect of our lives will be affected.

How about you, my friend? Are you weary? Have you reached a point where you don't think you can go on? Maybe you can't; but God can! "Our God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." (Ephesians 3:20)

Your "due season" is coming -- your reaping is at hand. Don't stop now! We have already been reaping some of the fruits of our home school labors in the lives of our two oldest children, now in their twenties. Dear friend, let me tell you, the fruit is sweet indeed! What a blessing it has been to see our young adults serving the Lord with their lives, and continuing to walk in the truth that they have been taught, in spite of the many mistakes that their parents made. Every minute, every hour, every day of sowing and laboring has been worth it all. I wonder if we would be enjoying this bountiful harvest if we had grown weary, and given up along the way? I thank God for His faithfulness, for carrying me through the tough times, and for enabling me to do what He wants me to do.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58)

Sharon and her husband, Pastor Dennis, live in upstate New York and have six children ages 27, 23, 17, 16, 11 and 9. Contact Info: Heir-Raising Tales, 6469 Frazier Rd., Moravia, NY 13118-3356; HeirRaisingTales@att.net. Web site: www.heirraisingtales.com