

Family Heritage Developer

Walkersville Christian Family Schools - *Established 1983*
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"God forbid that I should forsake the inheritance of my fathers" -- 1 Kings 21:3



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Frustrated to Find Hope!

--by Joel Fischer & Gary Cox

"For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope."
(Romans 8:20, NIV)

Remember the account in Mark 9 of the demon-possessed boy that the disciples could not cast out? They were embarrassed and frustrated at their inability to cast them out and asked Jesus why. His answer? "This kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting." Frustration presses us to find where the hope is. When the normal, everyday approach to life is not enough, frustration drives us to a deeper spiritual level to seek a higher spiritual end.

The Christian home-school must embrace hardship in Jesus' call to discipleship. This hardship is easily found within the real-life frustrations of the ordinary home.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
Luke 9:23

Doubtless, your family has experienced the frustration of not being able to achieve the "ideal" of a successful Christian home-schooling family. Perhaps you're frustrated by not being able to get through school time without interruptions. Or maybe you're

discouraged that it just doesn't seem like your making any breakthroughs with dealing with a child's behavioral problem. Or maybe you're even despairing whether you can ever be the godly dad or mom you feel God wants you to be. But the Good Shepherd hasn't defined successful discipleship as days without hiccups, people without problems, or homes without needs. Instead, He has defined successful discipleship as occurring when we take up His cross on a daily basis, and follow His agenda for our lives. In His goodness and design, God has provided the home as the first place of His discipleship program. It is not a polished, lofty institution with picture-perfect pupils; it is a sheepfold, where needy flesh-and-blood followers of Jesus Christ are being trained and nurtured within the context of the "thorn and thistle" reality of a fallen world (Genesis 3:16-19).

There are three key concepts that enable you to treasure God's design for the family while also equipping you to answer Jesus' call to discipleship within the "sheepfold" of your home. These concepts are knowledge, nurture, and need.

Knowledge is the training necessary for a child to be effectively equipped for the purpose for which he has been designed

and called by his Creator. Knowledge involves not only academic study, but also real-life activities and projects within the home that practically prepares children for future work and service.

Knowledge is of no profit, however, without nurture, which is the development of a child's relationships, foremost with God, and then with his family and those beyond context of the home. Nurture involves instilling and cultivating within a child's heart a love for others, a value for the eternal, and a desire for Christ-like character.

Knowledge and nurture are empowered at the point of need, which is the real-life hardship, tension, and difficulty (in our homes) which compose the "crosses" that Jesus has commanded us to daily embrace. Needs are God's way of revealing His agenda for our lives and the lives of our families, and are the catalyst He uses to achieving His work in our lives. For that reason, Christian-discipleship within the home involves a needs-based "curriculum," whereby God's purpose and provision for our lives are discerned at the point of need.

Be encouraged that these three concepts for successful Christian home-based discipleship can be applied anywhere, in any Christian home, whether your family lives on a 10-acre farm, or in a high-rise apartment. Do not believe for a second that because you aren't like this family or that family, or because you're not using this curriculum or that curriculum, or because you don't live in this location or that location, that Christ's call of discipleship in your home is a hopeless enterprise. Comparing your "sheepfold" to someone else's will only result in needless discouragement; your perceived lack of knowledge or resources is a faulty perception. God, who has unlimited

knowledge, has provided all that is necessary for the success of His discipleship program in your sheepfold. He has given you His Word, the basis for all knowledge; He has given you Himself, the basis of all relationships; and He has given you "sheep," who are waiting to be trained and nurtured through their times of need.

And the good news is that if you are feeling like you aren't a perfect "home-school family," you are already in a position for success, for Christ's "strength is made perfect in weakness;" and when we are weak, then we are strong. (II Cor. 12:9-10).

May God give you a renewed vision of your home as His sheepfold of discipleship, a re-kindled passion to train and nurture your children, and a joyful understanding that the needs that arise in your family are the very opportunities for your family to follow Jesus' call to take up your "cross" and follow Him.



Joel Fischer is a home school graduate and an alumnus of Oak Brook College of Law and Government Policy and is a legal assistant serving the homeschool

community at HSLDA. Born and raised in the Northwest, Joel now resides in Frederick, Maryland with his wife Mikaela and son, Liam. The whole family enjoys the close proximity of the historical heritage of the East Coast. Joel is a member of Walkersville Christian Fellowship, and is blessed to be part of the home schooling communities on both sides of the continental United States. Joel is the host for the WCFS radio program Family by Design heard on WTHU, Thurmont, Maryland and available on the web at WCFS.EDU.

Becky's Tips

Longing/Wishing

Recently I asked a young mom what she wished she had more of. I thought her answers were universal (almost). Then I began to ponder how to help her. I just had to share how amazing our God is and how easy it is for us to complicate things if our focus wavers from Christ to good things in the world.

Wish I had more:

Consider:

Time

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Mt. 6:33 KJV

Obedient Children

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Mt. 6:33 NIV

Family Harmony

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Mt. 6:33 ESV

Resources

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you." Mt. 6:33 HCBS

Peace/Joy

"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." Mt. 6:33 NLT

Amazing, isn't it. Then the question comes to mind, "How do I seek the Kingdom of God? How do I seek His righteousness?"

1) I've noticed that when I'm in a dilemma and pause to ponder the way of God, very often there is that inner voice that directs me toward righteous choices. That inner voice (often called conscience) is planted there by God for the very purpose of drawing us to His ways.

2) Attitude is important. If I'm open and teachable the best way to redeem the time or gain these other wishes, will become clear to me as I read, pray and seek counsel. I can choose to have a surrendered attitude.

3) Thanking God for His promise to provide my needs (Phil. 4:19) is important. Focusing on the greatness of God, the generosity of God will help reduce my fretting over what I wish I had.

4) Pausing to check who the ruler is in each area of my life will help me understand why I am not content and how to reach contentment.

5) Guarding against over-scheduling and the resultant fatigue will help me be of a mind set to feast on God's Word and enjoy His fellowship.

I am rejoicing with you today, because together we can secure victory as we seek His kingdom and His righteousness. Call me if I can help. (301-797-1212)

Love, Becky

STUDENT DEVELOPER

AMERICA: The Great Melting Pot

By Zachary Jones

For many years, America has been known as The Great Melting Pot. This is because different people groups from all over Europe came to this land and melded together to form what she is today. This diversity has shown to be a great blessing today. It has given us firstly the ability to cope with different scenarios and trials, secondly an advanced industry with a variety of skills and trades, and finally, a unique culture.

The ability to adjust and to cope with difficulties was manifest from the very first settlers. They were faced with trials and difficulties never before encountered, but persevered through them to develop their own way of life. Many people who came to America were leaving behind persecution or hardships. They were looking for a new start and a better life. Although they knew that life would be hard, they were willing to push through the difficulties for the sake of their posterity knowing that they would have a better chance here than in the increasingly crowded Europe. On their arrival, each brought with them their own natural talents as well as a strong determination and a will to work. Using these diverse talents, they were able to cope with the environment and shape America into what she is today.

In a similar fashion, America became very industrial. Once the 13 colonies became states united together under a common government, the various parts were able to exploit their talents and benefit the growing country as a whole. As mentioned before, the settlers brought with them their skills; and, when they were applied together, America was able to

expand and develop more rapidly than any country previous. Many inventions that revolutionized travel and work were birthed here in the U.S. Most countries are made up of one common people group with a limited mind and skillset. However, thanks to the diversity of the American pioneers, we have a variety of skills and a broader vision.

Due to its vast and diverse background, America also created a whole new culture and way of life. Although not identical, the various countries in Europe were very similar to one another. In America however, things were vastly different. Each group of people brought their own customs with them which were then adapted to fit into the nature of the country. The different cultures then molded together to form who we are. In addition, that culture is diverse within itself. Each part of America has its own story and these were all brought together to form the American culture as we know it today.

As we saw by looking at our ability to cope, our advanced industry, and our unique culture, the diversity of America has given us a rich heritage and a successful country blessed by God. Through wars and famines, the American people have united together from different backgrounds to become the great nation we are today. In order to fully understand and appreciate who we are, we must first look back and see where we came from. We are people of different colors and from different backgrounds all blending together in the Great American Melting Pot.