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Prepared to Impact the World

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8



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ISSUE 1
VOLUME 4

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character p. 6*

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For God so
loved the
world...

Abekamazing is a service of Abeka, Pensacola, Florida. Our mission is to support and equip students, teachers, and parents by providing amazing Pre-K through Grade 12 academic resources based upon biblical values. We're here to help homeschooling families and Christian schools give their students the knowledge and skills they need.

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Katie Nagel, Elizabeth Shertzer, Kim Smith
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Dear Friends,

Will the precious child you tuck in tonight grow up to influence the world for Christ? If he's to become a godly leader, he'll need biblical character.

How can parents teach that? The simple answer is with God's help! The Lord provides many character-training opportunities. We just have to respond to them.

One such opportunity happened twenty years ago. Our then five-year-old was learning about prayer. While picking him up from Junior Church his teacher said,

"I'm amazed you're here! Chicken pox is difficult for adults to overcome; how's your husband?" I raised one eyebrow and looked down at our son.

"Teacher," he said, "At my family we got no good prayer 'we-quests,' so I made 'em up!"

Our cherub had been lying elsewhere and was becoming good at it. **We decided to take the opportunity.**

"The Bible says that lying is wrong," my husband said.

"You're going to make this right by telling all those kids the truth."

The next Junior Church, I was asked to sit in the back. "Otherwise," my husband smiled, "there's no telling how this will turn out."

Beside me in a little chair sat our perpetrator.

"Trent has something to say," announced his teacher.

"I w-h-y-e-d," he said.

"Mommy and Daddy do not have chicken pops.

I'm saw-ee. Do you forgive me?"

Without hesitation the other children answered, "NOOO!" I covered my expression, but Trent wasn't laughing. It appeared he would not be forgiven until his teacher said, "Yes, we forgive you, don't we children!"

Some may say we should have let this go. What's the big deal? It was a harmless lie; everyone does it. Children should not be held responsible for their actions. He was just being creative. Who is to say what's right or wrong? Isn't making a good excuse just as good as making things right?

Actually, making things right is a theme well documented in the Bible.

So is lying.

And they are both worth considering

since we don't know who we're tucking in . . .

Until next time,



Tabby
Tabby Hershberger
Senior Editor
Write to me at
amazinghomeschool@abeka.com

That's my little boy on page 4 now tucking in his own son.



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Instilling Biblical CHARACTER

by Renee Bryant

Noah didn't learn the character trait of obedience when he began building the ark. His character was developed long before. Strength of character takes years to cultivate. Want to instill biblical character in your children? Let them see godly examples, learn to use character-building words, and practice doing the right thing!

Learn from Biblical Examples

There's a connection between the example of Enoch walking with God in Genesis 5 and Noah walking with God in Genesis 6. Enoch was Noah's great-grandpa. Noah didn't have Scripture. He only had communication with God and the example of his parents and grandparents. Kindergartners often mirror and magnify the behavior of others. Your example is the most influential. It must be consistent with what you say. Support character stories with Scripture or songs that also reinforce biblical character traits.

Learn to Embrace Hard Times

Our faith is built by seasons of testing. A big test is often preceded by smaller ones. Would it be wrong to surmise that Noah may have faced less-challenging trials while his faith was young and more difficult ones as his faith grew stronger? With each trial, God revealed more of how trustworthy He is. When it was time

for Noah to build the ark, Genesis 7:5 says that he was willing to do all that the Lord commanded him. Highlight God's care or provision in little things. Say: "We can trust God" and "Look what God did!" Help your child connect God's actions with His attributes.

Learn from Historical Figures

Abraham Lincoln's mother "instilled the virtues of honesty and compassion . . . and sowed the seeds of his intellectual curiosity,"¹ Although she died suddenly

when Lincoln was 9, testimony given later by Lincoln's step-mom was a testament to previous nurturing. She said that he was a model child. Lincoln's mother must have purposed to take advantage of every teachable moment and address inappropriate behavior early, laying the groundwork for his life of integrity. Use character

words daily; highlight acts of character such as saying: "You chose kindness! Thank you for being dependable." Create or capitalize on opportunities to practice being respectful, taking responsibility, and forgiving others.

Plan to Try

Character development takes time and follows an expected progression very similar to a child's physical development. Because a child must first crawl and then walk, each new skill must build on its predecessor. If a child does not progress physically, we become concerned about developmental delay. **Why is it then, that we protect our children from experiencing the next step of character challenge which**



Renee Bryant taught preschool and was a nursery director for over 20 years. She has four grown children.

is the catalyst to their character development? Allowing a child to face his challenges is the only way emotional resiliency and strength of character can be developed.

Start Now

We're not always going to get parenting right. Fortunately, while children are growing, there is still time to instill biblical character by showcasing godly examples, using character-building words, and practicing doing the right thing! ■

¹<https://www.history.com/amp/news/the-two-mothers-who-molded-lincoln>

Here's How the Development of KINDNESS MIGHT LOOK

- **Infants:** learn to smile and wave
- **Toddlers:** learn to say *hello* and *thank you*
- **Preschoolers:** learn to say *Please* *help me*
- **Kindergartners:** learn to use words to articulate needs
- **Elementary-age children:** learn to implement problem-solving techniques they've seen demonstrated
- **Middle schoolers:** learn to observe a need and offer to help or find someone who can
- **High schoolers:** learn to perceive a need; do something to help
- **Adults:** learn to meet a need with no thought of acknowledgment because helping is the right thing to do



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Prepared to Impact the WORLD

by Elizabeth Shertzer

Homeschool parents teach more than academics.



Elizabeth's
parents:
Glen &
Dorothy



Elizabeth with
Belizean friends

Through careful nurturing in two different homeschool families, Jonathan and Elizabeth Shertzer grew up to become missionaries to the people of Belize. Elizabeth describes how their parents prepared them.

Our parents shared the same goal.

We both come from typical families with normal issues, but our parents desired to raise godly children. They knew that their desire would be meaningless if not acted upon. Their actions, especially in the following areas, greatly affected our personal walk with God.

We had family devotions.

My family regularly read Scripture and prayed together. My mom led me to the Lord during family devotions. All eight of my siblings are serving the Lord. Jonathan's family memorized Scripture together and were challenged to read through the Bible. Jonathan's brother also serves the Lord. In both homes, God's Word was a priority.

Reading the Bible was part of homeschooling.

Jonathan accepted Christ during one of Abeka's daily Bible lessons! My day started with my mother's Heavenly Seven: 1. Make your bed, 2. Get dressed, 3. Brush your teeth, 4. Wash your face, 5. Comb your hair, 6. Read your Bible, 7. Eat your breakfast. The valuable habit

of Bible reading was established as a meaningful part of our homeschooling.

Church was never optional.

Even during our family vacations, we attended church. In inclement weather, we still read God's Word and prayed. One church night after taking my first teaching job, I had papers to grade. For the first time I realized I could skip church. So, I made a decision. I'd no longer attend because my parents required it, but because I personally wanted to honor the Lord. Jonathan's mom faithfully kept her sons in church while her husband worked out of town.



We experienced God's faithful and on-going provision.

While young, our parents taught us to give ten percent of our money to God. Because Jonathan's parents were such a consistent example of giving to the Lord, when Jonathan began his first job, he naturally gave to God, too. My parents also taught giving sacrificially to missions. My faith exploded as a teenager while watching God provide money I committed to missions. Later, while still giving, God allowed both of us to graduate debt-free from college! This greatly affected our views of finances.

Our parents made the most of homeschool opportunities.

My husband's mom was especially astute in cultivating his desire for the mission field. When Jonathan was four years old, he told his mom that he wanted to be a missionary. She began diligently preparing him. During homeschooling, they read missionary biographies. She invited missionaries over for lunch. She enrolled him in summer training programs. Both our parents helped us develop good friendships, especially during our high school years. These friends sharpened us and helped shape who we became.

These five areas carried over into our adult lives. What started as habits in childhood have now developed into personal convictions.

What We're Doing to Influence Our Children

We believe that the Bible is our greatest resource when shaping the hearts and minds of our own children: Rachel (3), Josiah (2), Anna (1), and Baby Shertzer on the way in May. Teaching the Bible is a daily, conscious choice. It will not happen unless we as parents are purposeful.

■ **We've made personal devotions a priority.** As a new mom, I struggled to have consistent personal devotions until I saw a picture of a mother reading her Bible on the floor amidst the chaos of her children playing nearby! God is helping me read and pray for 15 minutes a day amidst the noise. I tell my children that I'm getting ready to read God's Word, and I put my phone in another room. Initially I had to train my mind to stay focused, but now devotions have become my lifeline! They transform my mind and help me keep a spiritual focus.

■ **We're emphasizing the importance of God's Word.** Just like our parents, we have devotions with our family. We read from a children's Bible and point out positive/negative character traits. Our children fall asleep listening to Bible music. We also try to make learning the Bible fun with a rhyming game to teach Bible facts. I ask Bible questions to the tune of *The Farmer in the Dell*. For example: Who was Ruth's baby? Who was Ruth's baby? Do you know your Bible well? Who was Ruth's baby?

Want to raise a child who could impact the world for Christ? Be faithful!

In a day when many children are not embracing the faith of their fathers, we must not forget that God is looking for simple faithfulness. Our parents were great examples. Their commitment was the compelling factor that caused both of us to fully embrace our faith and future ministry to the people of Belize. ■



Jonathan's
parents:
Dave &
Barbara



Jonathan
preaching
in Belize



The
Shertzer
family

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The Truth About Hard Things



Jill Dewhurst is a nurse, author, musician, and homeschool mother of two sons.

As homeschooling moms,

we want our children to become adults with character traits such as integrity, honesty, and a heart to serve others. Since our culture is bombarding us with anti-biblical parenting advice, we must rely on the truth found in God's Word. We must also recognize the value that comes from doing hard things.

1
TRUTH

Instruct your children to work before they play, for all things should be done "decently and in order." (1 Cor. 14:40)

Fun is good, but it is enjoyed more after the work is finished. Because they love sports, my middle school boys each have a "zone" of the house they are responsible to clean that includes their bedroom, a bathroom, and one other room. In addition, they take out the trash, assist with laundry, and help make dinner. Once their schoolwork is done and their zone is clean, they can play. Inspect their work before they play. To quote Ronald Reagan, "Trust, but verify." While nothing is wrong with fun, keeping work as a higher priority will produce character qualities of diligence, responsibility, and a good work ethic.

2
TRUTH

Set definite screen-time limits, for we must add "to knowledge temperance" or self-control. (II Pet. 1:6).

Teaching our children how to navigate technology is important, but unrestricted use of electronic

devices can have devastating effects. A study performed by the University of Alberta showed that a child exceeding 2 hours of screen-time per day is 7.7 times more likely to develop ADHD than a child whose daily screen time is 30 minutes or less.¹ Set limits; observe moderation. The biblical character trait of temperance or self-control has a positive effect on every area of a child's life.

LIE: A good mom does not distinguish between her kids' needs and their wants. She provides whatever they ask for, immediately.

3
TRUTH

Getting everything you want leads to discontentment and materialism. In the real world, the best things are worth waiting for. The Bible says that the one who is "patient in spirit is better." (Ecc. 7:8)

Let's be honest. Because we enjoy giving our kids what they want, we must resist the urge to cave in every time they ask for something. Teaching our children to wait ultimately teaches them patience and priorities. Some things, like saving money, can only be accomplished with patience. For instance, a car with a bow won't just appear on the driveway; our children must wait while they work and save for it. Most importantly, patience will help our children learn to wait for the Lord and His timing.

LIE: Relinquish your authority and improve your child's independence by letting him make decisions.

4
TRUTH

God has given us the authority to parent our children. Our kids must learn to "hear instruction" and "forsake not the law of their mother." (Prov. 1:8)

Teenagers need to learn how to make good decisions, but this should happen under the careful eye of their parents. The problem comes, for instance, when a child decides to quit his piano lessons and his parents cancel the lessons. When a child is given the authority to make decisions based on his desires, parents give up valuable character training about how to choose the hard things—like commitment. God made you the parent. Choose

what your child will be involved in based on the goals you have for your family. Children with a submissive spirit toward authority, will become young adults capable of responding well to their employers and God Himself.

LIE: Encourage your child's self-esteem at all costs. Winning is everything.

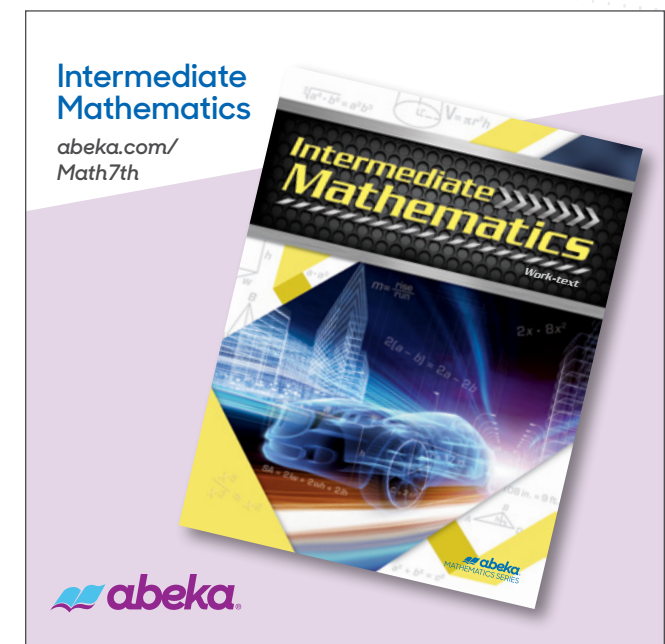
5
TRUTH

Consider other people first. "...Let each esteem others better than themselves." (Phil. 2:3)

Life includes both success and failure. God never commands us to win, but we are commanded to value others. And failure helps us grow, if we choose to learn from it. We can esteem others better than ourselves when we understand that our worth is based on who we are in Christ, not in what we attempt to accomplish.

Why choose to teach the hard things? Because instilling godly character transforms lives. We partner with God to mold our little treasures in the same way our Heavenly Father molds us. Sometimes that includes hard things like trials and struggles that can be used to make us exactly what He wants us to be! 🌈

¹Mandhane, Piush J, et al. "Screen Time Is Associated with Inattention Problems in Preschoolers: Results from the CHILD Birth Cohort Study." PLoS One. April 17, 2019. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30995220>



Character Starts with Us

by Kim Smith

After 4 years of marriage and 2 sweet children, I'm especially thankful for my classroom years when God taught me that the choices I make, the words I say, and the actions I take all have consequences for someone else. If I do not exhibit character myself, I will not be able to inspire it in my children.

Here's what God taught me in the classroom in preparation for the challenges of motherhood.

Label the day before it labels you

A morning decision regarding the day's outcome can change your whole perspective! A veteran teacher once responded this way to my question about her day, "My day was great, but as to how the students were, that's a different story." I've never forgotten that truth. If I've prayed and prepared, I can have a great day. Although it may be a difficult day of disciplining or teaching, I can still know that I'm doing what God wants for the good of my children.

Learn from 3-year-olds

I observed several 3-year-olds respond profoundly when answering this question: "What happens when we obey?" The children shouted, "Blessings!" "What happens when we

disobey?" "Consequences!" Enlist your child's help labeling actions as either blessings or consequences. Ever heard, "Mommy, I don't like you"? It's easier not to take our child's reactions personally when we're just responding with consequences.

Choose purposefully

My childhood Sunday school teacher gave me a 3x5 card that was displayed in my room until I left for college. On it were three simple statements that have impacted my life: *I am made in God's image.*

I can choose my attitude. I

choose to feel great! I recall these statements about purposeful choices even now as an adult.

Respond to your wakeup calls

A colleague once asked, "Did you pray for your students today?" "Of course," I responded. "Then why do you look like you dislike them?" she asked. She spoke out of love, but how it pricked. The Lord used her words to challenge me about

specific prayer. I began praying particularly for my children's souls, their spiritual growth, their academic needs, and even for character development! My prayer journal changed as did the meaningful smile on my face.

Keep the door open

As a teen, I remember asking my algebra teacher for help. I was told to figure it out myself. It felt as if a door were shut in my face. I was embarrassed and even more lost. Another math teacher found out and helped me. I remember deciding to be the **second** kind of teacher. Sometimes my patience is tested when lots of repeated help is needed, but with the Lord's enablement, may our children always find their mama's door open.

Get a daily golden nugget

I can't be a godly example without my golden nugget from God's Word. This became real when one of my students made several choices that resulted in consequences the day before. On the next day, I was ready to lecture him when the Holy Spirit brought to mind the nugget from my Bible reading that morning: "I will remember their sins no more." Who was I to hold anything over from the

previous day when the Lord doesn't even do that? Instead, the Holy Spirit guided my words. I heard myself saying, "I love you, and I'm glad you're in my class!"

Watch your body language

You've heard that your walk talks louder than your talk talks! Though body language is unspoken, it's still heard loud and clear. Are your children bored or disgruntled? Instead of scolding, check your spirit. *Do you demonstrate God's love in body and voice?* Is your face joyful? Children learn of God's love when they watch us live our daily lives. Does your body language say that you're interested?

Check comprehension

I'd previously taught the Bible story about Gideon. While reviewing, Alicia said that it was a story about a trumpet and a camera. A camera? Eventually it occurred to me. Gideon held a trumpet and a *pitcher*. Alicia heard *picture* and thought he held a camera! A friend taught about Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dream. Her student said that the dream meant 7 years of corn and *salmon* (instead of famine)! Just because our children sit attentively doesn't

mean they are comprehending. Aid comprehension with frequent and direct questions.

Prove your love when boundaries are tested

I was afraid of temper tantrums until I met Cheyenne, a scrappy 6-year-old living in foster care. She decided to put me to the test as guests arrived to observe our classroom. While doing my best teacher stare, she threw herself on the floor and started wailing. After Cheyenne returned from the office with an apology, it wasn't easy to accept. Then she shocked me. Every time I passed her desk, she'd reach out to touch me or to say that she loved me. I learned that she needed to know that I meant what I said and would even give consequences when others were present. She needed to learn that I would forgive her, and that I still loved her. Tantrums are a child's way of testing the boundaries and proving the love! ■



Kim Smith is a former teacher and Abeka consultant. She has two children.



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Ready with an Answer

Thought Leaders in Training

"What do you think?" If you ask your middle schooler that question about big issues, they might not have an answer. If all we want are mindless followers, this wouldn't seem like much of a problem. But 1 Peter 3:15 urges otherwise: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready *always* to give an answer to every man that asketh." If you mindfully invest in your children, you'll build on their faith and prepare them to "give an answer." You'll train them to be thought leaders, capable of voicing what they believe.

The Foundation of Faith

The faith that it takes to be a thought leader is bound to the intangible, rooted in something larger than lifestyle, stronger than personal fears, more worthy than personal opinion. It must be the marker against which you teach your children to measure everything you are and everything they could be. Faith must be based on something outside this world: the eternal. When children understand that God through His Word is the great motivator, that's where faith and its fruits begin.

The Communication of Faith

But if faith is the bedrock, then the next layer is the ability to communicate that faith. Do you want your children to have meaningful thoughts and the ability to share them? Tell your children what you believe about matters, big and small. Teach them a reasoning process by discussing biblical concepts and then asking, "What do you think?" Make them reason while guiding them toward a biblical worldview. You will teach them logic through your continual investment in this two-way discussion.

The Art of Storytelling

The next layer is teaching your children the power of metaphor, of storytelling. The Great Thought Leader, Jesus, used both during His time on earth. A masterful communicator knows that a story makes things personal, allowing the audience to put themselves into a scenario—to imagine actions and visualize outcomes. Show your children how a story is the easiest and most pleasant way to teach a lesson.

The Display of Kindness

Another layer is to teach the power of love and kindness. You can strive to be a thought leader all you want—but if you lack kindness, you'll usually lack an audience. Without an audience, you are no longer a leader. Thought leaders must offer truth, but in the most meaningful way possible. Don't shovel the truth on pell-mell, without emotional intelligence! Wisdom stops and examines the mode—the mood. It applies the Golden Rule. It remembers that God is Love.

The Power of Prayer

Preparing thought leaders is a calculated risk. When young people are taught to reason, to communicate masterfully, to exercise emotional intelligence—they have potential for great spiritual power as long as they stay tethered to their biblical moorings. The final step for raising thought leaders is therefore powerful intercession. Intercede for your children's hearts. Ask God to protect them from the dangerous spiritual forces that can come disguised as philosophy and freedom.

Raise Thought Leaders

Our goal should be to raise thought leaders—not mindless followers. Even though there are many children whose insecurities are more powerful than their values system, this need not be said of your children! Your consistent investment in them, paired with their belief in God, will help them to think deeply, to lead confidently, and to be ready always to give an answer. ■

PRACTICE FOR GIVING AN ANSWER

- Pair today's questions with family study of the Bible.
- Suggest a topic. Have everyone respond in 300 written words or less.
- Decide in advance how your family can make a point and still esteem others better than themselves.
- Debate in the safety of your home; uncover elements of truth on the opposing side.
- Foster an attitude of willingness. Discuss everything; field all their questions.
- Applaud discernment between a biblical worldview and humanism.
- Tie opinions to foundational elements like the Bible or the Constitution.
- Practice communication skills with step-by-step detailed descriptions.
- Practice listening skills by asking everyone not to talk about themselves for one day.

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Making a Difference Together

By Katie Nagel



Can families work together to have an impact in this world? Missionaries Craig and Kristi Libby along with their children, Josh and Katie, are doing just that! The Libby family has found that making a difference starts with surrender.

Surrender First

While on a short-term mission trip as a single young woman, Kristi knew that God wanted her to reach the people of Mexico with the gospel. As she surrendered, God quenched her fears. Kristi's experience and passion in medical work made her a perfect

fit for medical clinics. During these clinics, each patient is treated by a medical professional and then given the gospel in their own language.

Involve Your Family

As a result of Kristi's surrender, she soon met her husband and they began their family. Their model of joyful surrender was transferred to their two children. "Josh and Katie have been in ministry their whole lives," says Kristi. "Since they were babies, they have been a vital part of our connection to the Mexican

community." The Libbys both agree that when they first brought their children along, a new door opened for more effective ministry.

Grow with the Opportunities

As soon as they were able, Josh and Katie began doing small jobs around the clinic like cleaning utensils, organizing games for the children, and helping make the patients feel more comfortable. Now as a sixth grader, Katie manages triage and diabetic foot care. Because of her age, the older generation is put at

ease with her needles because they say, "If a child can do it, it must not be that bad." Josh, a ninth grader, keeps all the utensils properly sterilized and prepared. He also helps plan and organize their 2-day medical brigades. As the Libbys watch their children's involvement, it's clear that there's no age requirement for being a part of God's work.

Allow Trials

Sometimes the Libbys' medical work takes the family deep into the Mexican jungle where transportation and safety become challenging. At times they've had to wade through

crocodile-infested waters. Sometimes the issue has been simply crossing the Mexican border. In 2013, Kristi was diagnosed with a form of lymphoma. Miraculously, her side effects were minimal and her treatments successful. With each difficulty, the Libbys have seen God intervene in miraculous ways. They praise God for the lessons they've learned and the treasured family memories they've made through many situations that originally seemed like mistakes.

Tap the Secrets to Service

In their nightly devotional and Bible time, Josh and Katie have grown spiritually as they have now read the Bible through completely. "This nightly tradition is what holds us together," says Kristi. Bible reading isn't the only secret to their service. The Libby children have also had a front row seat to answered prayer. "It's not uncommon to walk into the prayer tent during a brigade and see tears flowing as lives are being changed," says Kristi.

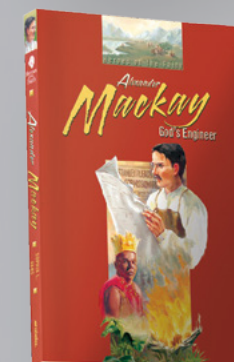
Utilize the Homeschool Advantage

Because of the flexibility of homeschooling, the Libby children know what it feels like to make a difference in this world while they're still young! They've seen real answers to prayer and have had a vital role serving with their parents in Mexico. Kristi says, "Our family finds strength in serving together." Can God use homeschool families to change the world? The Libby family is proof that He has! 🇲🇽



Katie Nagel is an ABA grad and Abeka video teacher.

Books about Missionaries and Other World Changers



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How Homeschool Moms Nurture Character

Parents who support biblical values must be diligent about keeping the "village" **out** and purposeful about getting biblical principles **in**. Consider these amazing ideas from readers about how to nurture character!

Sleeping Aid

Ecclesiastes 5:12 says that the sleep of a laboring man is sweet. When our son was 14, he was having trouble sleeping. We discussed this verse and determined he wasn't having enough labor to match his physical strength; he was a very strong teenager. We decided to match his chores with his physical ability. He says today, "It really worked. I remember being tired and able to sleep!" —Teresa H., KY



Deliverance from Fears

When our children are afraid, we try to point their fears back to Jesus. Psalm 34:4 tells us that God promises to hear and deliver us from our fears. We play Bible verses or Scripture songs when one of our children is dealing with fear. Sometimes sleeping with their little Bible is also a tangible help.

—Liberty P., IN

The Order Is Everything

For many years our morning schedule was: get up; have devotions; eat; then do chores. I noticed there was little motivation for working. By changing our schedule to make chore time before mealtime, we began observing the verse from II Thess. 3:10: *If a man doesn't work, neither shall he eat.* It works! —Stacey F., MN



A Word Fitly Spoken, Prov. 25:11

When we're struggling with bickering at our house, I give each child a cup with his name on it. It's filled with 100 pennies. As the day goes on, extra pennies are put in the correct cups for kind words.

Five pennies are withdrawn for every unkind word spoken. This helps my kids think about the effect their words have on others.

—Diana S., OH

Saving Our Tears

When I was eleven, I experienced an unfair situation. An adult took away something I'd won and gave it to someone else. My parents felt for my broken heart but could do little. My dad showed me Psalm 56:8b: *Put thou my tears into thy bottle.* He assured me that my heavenly Father cared about each one of my tears. He reminded me that my parents and my Savior loved me. He even gave me a small bottle to remember the verse.

—Bethany R., OH



Conquering Self-Control

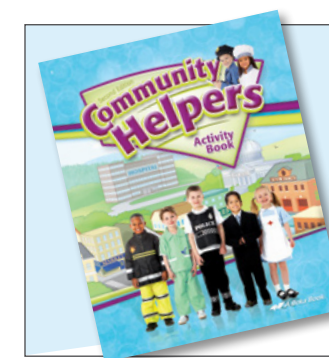
We had a child with a lack of self-control. We reminded her what Proverbs 16:32 says about a person who rules his spirit. We presented a ridiculous scenario illustrating how it would look if Mom had no rule over her spirit. For instance, what if a lady said something unkind and Mom just shoved her to the floor? It was enough to get the wheels turning in our daughter's mind!

—Carole H., AK

Don't Be Weary in Well Doing, Gal. 6:9

Our kids were weary in their ongoing piano practice, so my husband made a chart to reward practice. Those who did were paid 25¢. Our children started practicing on weekends just to make more money! Within a month, every child had greatly improved in performance and attitude!

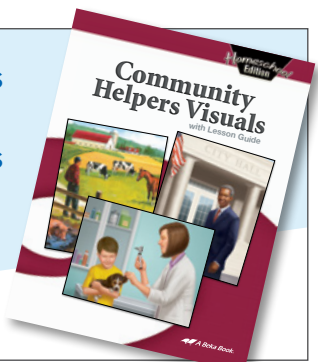
—Donna B., FL



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Faithfulness Practice

We required that our daughter contribute a percentage of everything she earned toward the cost of her braces. We wanted her to practice faithfulness in something small (Luke 16:10) before she has to pay all her own bills. It wasn't about the amount she turned in, but about the ownership she felt after contributing. We never once had to tell her to brush her teeth or to keep the bands on; she did it willingly since she was helping to pay! —Annette B., FL



Others First

To help our kids learn to esteem others (Phil. 2:3) and stop interrupting, especially when we're talking with other adults, we told our children to wait beside us until we ask what they need. Sometimes they run off after just a second. Whatever they wanted to say was not important enough to wait. It has helped them judge what we truly need to know! —Kay R., NC



No Teaching Excuses

A friend and I were discussing how difficult it is to teach our toddlers because we never know if they're sick or teething. Thankfully, my wise friend said, "If we allow circumstances to dictate our responses rather than what we know is right (James 4:17), we will teach our children to cry or pitch a fit every time something doesn't go their way. Circumstances will become their excuse for everything."

—Joyce W., OH



Meet Your New Mama

Our children were not listening. I knew I needed to do a better job of disciplining them, but I wasn't really sure how. First, I read these verses (Isa. 43:18-19). Then, a friend with a similar situation called me. We asked God for help; decided to become accountable to each other, and resolved that our kids would meet new mamas the next morning! —Lynn A., VA

The Example Doesn't Fall Far from the Tree

I remember seeing my mom read her Bible and pray. Because I love her, I wanted to be just like her! I soon began joining her to read my Bible even though I was only a child. Just as I watched my mom, I know my girls are watching me. 1 Timothy 4:12 says, *Be thou an example of the believers.* —Anna Hall, VA



Rest from Meltdowns

Proverbs 29:17 says that if we correct our kids, we will have rest. When I was a young mother, someone advised me to plan ahead for my child's public temper tantrums. She said I should stop whatever I was doing and take care of the matter, even if that meant leaving a cart full of groceries. As it turned out, when our son made his "display," I did have a cart full of groceries, but I left them. I took him home and took care of the matter. That was the only time we ever had a public meltdown. I'm not sure who was changed more by this advice, my son or me. It made me know that I valued his character training enough to leave. —Amy T., SC



Laziness Cure

It was noticeable at a young age that one of our kids didn't want to work (Col. 3:23). My husband invented a business for him, made flyers, and inspected every job! It was a lot of work for both of them, but our son grew up to be a hard-working man.

—Elaine R., GA

Do-Over, Please

We have 5 kids ages 9 and under. We're still learning how to instill biblical character. Our pastor told us, "It's ok to put on the brakes and start over with raising your kids right." Before that, we honestly had no idea we could re-do how we were teaching our kids. Deuteronomy 6:7 is a reminder about being diligent.

—Tabitha H., SD



We're ready to Influence Our World

Seven former homeschoolers now graduating seniors from PCC* share how God prepared them to influence their world.

Homeschool Foundation

God was at work building their future's foundation during homeschooling.

"Homeschooling prepared me to be less dependent socially and more focused on accountability to God," notes **Seth** (WA), *pastoral ministries*.

"Homeschooling challenged me to make good habits," says **Sarah** (PA), *pre-law*.

"Keeping my room clean helped me learn how to put my life on a schedule and find success in college," explains **Tim** (NY), *criminal justice*.

College Preparation

God tied together academics, people, and teachers to design the exact preparation needed!

"I get to take everything I've learned these past four years and teach back home," says **Kaylee**.

Bradley (TX), *chemistry major*, said, "I've learned how to be an effective chemist while showing the love of God to the people I work around."

Future Operation

Prepared. Equipped. Ready.

"I know what God has called me to do," **Cory** shares, "and waiting for Him to finalize details is the thrilling part of graduating into the real world."

Jonah will pursue a Ph.D. in Biochemistry. His advice to homeschoolers, "Look at every step you take; allow God's Word to light your path."

Seth will use what he learned to be a church planter. "I want to live, breathe, and speak truth every day."

Kaylee (MD), *elementary education*, learned while at home that "you have to read the Bible for yourself and not just blindly accept what people are saying."

Jonah (IN), *pre-med*, learned to compete with himself while homeschooling; "be the best you can be; it will cause you to succeed with everything you try."

Cory (TN), *youth ministries*, remembers his parents' part, "I was taught character by my parents. Good character will help any student in college."

Teachers influenced **Cory** to pursue teaching and curriculum writing. "I have my greatest passions because my teachers went the extra mile," he says.

Jonah will take with him what he learned from a college lab. "Being a lab assistant is about more than just grading papers," Jonah explains. "It's about helping students acquire the knowledge they need to excel in their classes. It's about leading from behind."

Sarah plans to be a civic lawyer. "Being a Christian helps me understand why we have laws and how best to uphold them."

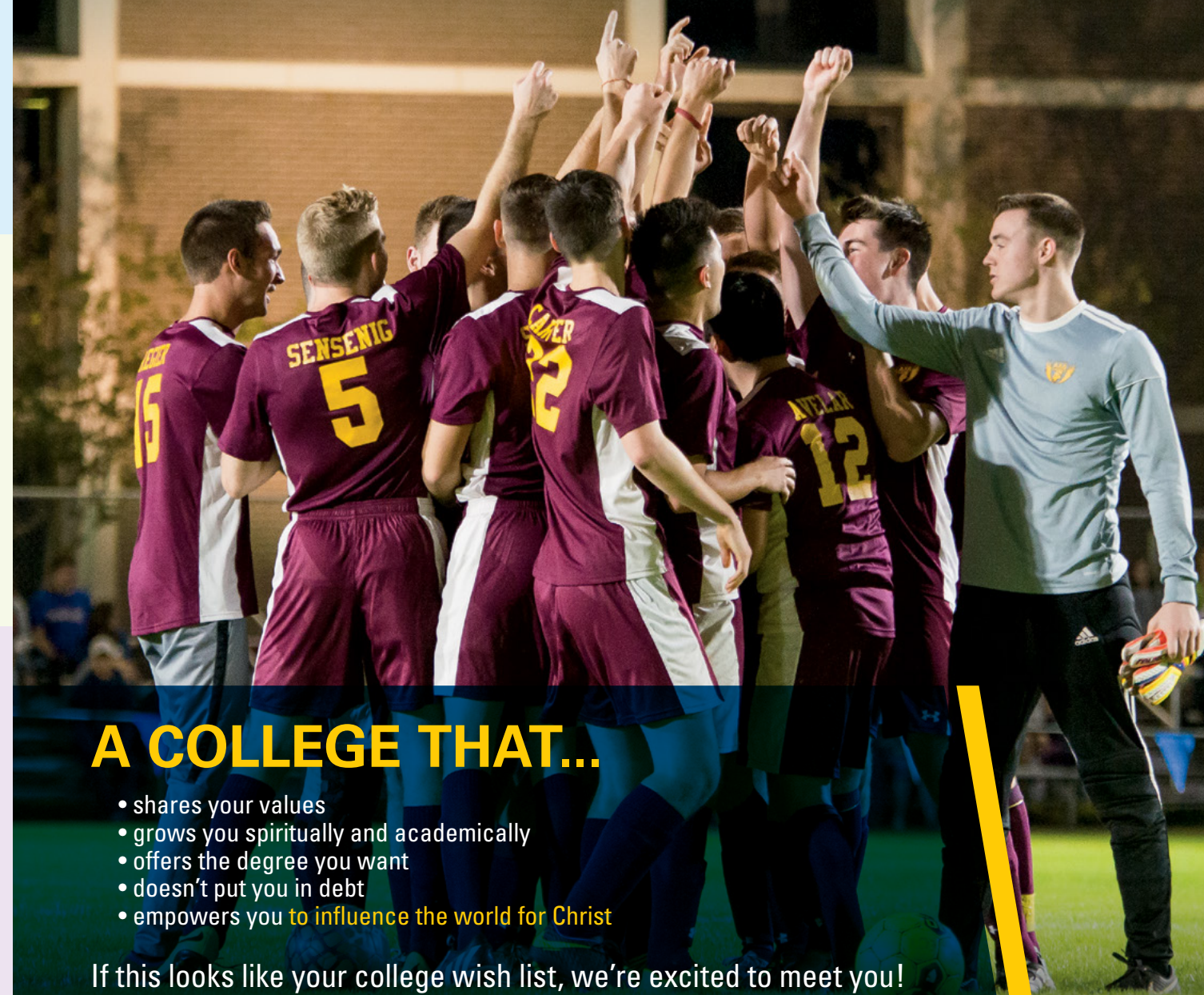
Tim has a prayer for his future work in law enforcement, "Lord, please help me to be a godly influence while protecting and serving my community."

Bradley's best advice: "stay diligent in your studies, and trust God to get you to the next right place."

Want to influence our world? A godly foundation and prayerful preparation makes you equipped and ready! ■

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