

# Training for Triumph E-Newsletter

## Issue 015

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## Section I: Training for Triumph (TFT) Events and Announcements

### 1. Hello: Letter From Donna

Dear Readers,

Happy Mother’s Day! I love Mother’s Day. I don’t have to be a perfect Mom to love Mother’s Day. I love Mother’s Day not because I am so good, but because I am doing the best I can. That is all that is expected of all of us. Sometimes people of my generation are mad at their parents for not raising them very well or not providing more for them, etc. And while my parents were unsaved, poor, and eventually divorced, I do not harbor any bad feelings towards them. I know in my heart of hearts that they did the best that they could do with what they knew and what they had. (Obviously, I’m not talking about evil people and evil deeds here.) And that’s what I am doing...the best that I can do. Maybe things aren’t perfect. Many moms are better at many things than I am. But that doesn’t bother me. My goal is not to be the world’s best mom (though I love it when my kids say I am! ☺). My goal is to do what I know I should do. My goal is to do my very best with what I have and what I know. And then, I can have a Happy Mother’s Day every year—and let God take care of the rest.

(And a word of encouragement to those of you who do not feel you are doing the best you can do: do the next right thing. You can’t be disciplined, encouraging, content, self-controlled, and all the things you know you should be and **can** be overnight. Just start this moment, doing the next right thing. Then you can add another next right thing. And another. God’s mercies are new every morning, and I certainly take advantage of that in my life!)

Speaking of Mother’s Day, I had a great surprise waiting for me the night before Mother’s Day

when I got home with Kara from her dance. All nine of my family (minus Kara, who says she was being the decoy—what a wimpy job! ☺) were here and just cleaned, scrubbed, and organized the things in my house and yard that were driving me crazy. I had been threatening to mutiny on my stacks of edits and clean this house with a toothbrush, but I won't meet the deadlines for Volume I of CQLA if I do that. So, to ease my burden and stress, I got a housecleaning brigade. Boy, do I love editing and schooling in my newly-cleaned house!

In addition to cleaning, they got me a new-used desk and had it all set up. My old one was a garage sale desk from a dozen years-plus ago, was not a computer desk, and was not the right height for keyboarding. Thus, I had neck and shoulder aches whenever I worked too long at it, which is one reason I seldom write at the desktop computer. Anyway, I had picked out the desk at a used furniture store with Ray a few days before but didn't know they were going to get it for me yet. A funny thing happened when I was looking at it with the sales clerk. He commented that the person had consigned it once before at twice the price, but he re-consigned it at this lower price when it didn't sell. He said it didn't sell because it had quite a few scratches on it. (It's a roll top, and most of the scratches are inside.) Anyway, I said, "That's okay. I like to buy furniture that is pre-scratched. Then I don't get upset at my kids for scratching it up." He laughed incredulously, but I was serious. Now, I don't think kids should purposely tear things up; however, I have also learned that I don't have to have everything perfect—or my way. Things get scratched. Things get stained. Kids are messy. More kids are messier. More kids in a small house are messiest. And I can either hold tightly onto things of the world—and expect everything to be my way. Or I can release "things" and live a life of contentment in whatever God allows me to have. Sometimes it is better to just go ahead and get something "pre-scratched" to avoid holding onto it too tightly. ☺

Everyone here has spring fever! Or maybe it's summer fever; I don't know, but we're all ready to do something different. Those of you who are planning spring and summer homeschool gatherings can check out our website for a list of nearly fifty topics that Ray, our grown children (that sounds strange!), and I are available to speak about. We would love to come and challenge and encourage the homeschool families in your area! Additionally, if you are only several hours or so from us, we would love to come and do an all-day language arts workshop (not just for CQLA or MC users). See the workshop info provided in this newsletter, too.

It is a joy to help homeschoolers! Feel free to call or email with how we can help you. Check out our new tapes below. And send new homeschoolers our way. We love new homeschoolers! ☺

Love,  
Donna

## **2. Calendar of Events for TFT: Fort Wayne, CHEO (Ohio), and More**

Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>—Joshua will be speaking at a homeschool graduation in Sturgis, Michigan

Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>—We'll be vending and doing a CQLA workshop at the Fort Wayne Area Homeschool Expo---**Don't forget that FWAHS area, LEAH, WACHE, and SACHE families can purchase CQLA for \$20 off of each book year round**

Thursday, Friday, Saturday; June 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup>—We will be vending and speaking at CHEO in Columbus, Ohio I will speak about training children to be diligent and how to teach reading,

besides our two vendor workshops—Top 20 From 20 and CQLA

### **3. CQLA Friendship Vouchers: Earn Free CQLA Books By Recommending CQLA!**

CQLA Friendship Vouchers—Start Collecting Today!

CQLA users are excited about CQLA! They are telling their friends, neighbors, and relatives, and we appreciate that! As a way to offset the price increase that CQLA will undergo beginning January 1st, 2007, Training for Triumph is offering CQLA users "friendship vouchers" for simply sharing CQLA with friends, resulting in purchases of CQLA. Read the details below to find out how you can get all of your CQLA for \$0.00--doing nothing more than what many of you are already doing--sharing the good news of CQLA:

- (1) CQLA Friendship Vouchers will be distributed beginning January 1st, 2007.
- (2) A CQLA user (or future user!) may earn CQLA Friendship Vouchers by simply telling a friend about CQLA, resulting in that friend purchasing CQLA for herself.
- (3) Each time someone orders CQLA from TFT and tells us that "my friend told me about CQLA," and gives us that person's name and email address, the friend who told the buyer about CQLA will receive a voucher via email worth \$10 toward her future CQLA purchases.
- (4) A CQLA "Friend" may accumulate as many vouchers as desired, up to the total price (less shipping) of her CQLA order. For example, if Rosie tells three of her friends about CQLA and each of those friends orders two CQLA from TFT and tells us about Rosie, Rosie will receive six \$10 vouchers towards her next CQLA purchase.
- (5) CQLA Friendship Vouchers may be earned from January 1st, 2007 through June 1st, 2007.
- (6) CQLA Friendship Vouchers may be earned via email sales, phone sales, postal mail sales, or convention sales--any sales directly from TFT.
- (7) CQLA Friendship Vouchers must be redeemed by including them in a postal mailing with your payment for CQLA. For example, if your CQLA order totaled \$160 (excluding shipping and other character materials you may order), you may pay for it by sending ten vouchers and a check, money order, or credit card number for the remaining \$60.
- (8) CQLA Friendship Vouchers may be earned and redeemed regardless of the current selling price. (For example, if one of Rosie's friends buys her CQLA during our March sale for \$59 each; and three of them buy during our April \$69 sale; and two of them buy theirs at a convention special (from TFT, not another distributor); and three of them buy during the summer at full price, she will still get a ten dollar voucher from each sale, regardless of the selling prices her friends paid.)
- (9) The CQLA Friend must have an email address in which to receive vouchers (her email or a friend or relative's email). We will not be able to postal mail vouchers. She then must print them off and save them to mail to TFT in order to use them.
- (10) CQLA Friendship Vouchers may only be earned until June 1st, but they may be redeemed anytime through March 1st, 2008. Since we are unsure of how long the Friendship Voucher Program will be in place, we want CQLA users to have the opportunity to earn vouchers for their fall 2007 CQLA *and* even for their fall 2008 CQLA (if purchased by March 1st, 2008). Some of our CQLA users have talked multiple friends into ordering multiple books of CQLA, so purchasing that

number of CQLA with vouchers--or even for free--is a distinct possibility for many.

(11) A CQLA Friendship Voucher earner may tell her friends about CQLA one-on-one, in a small group, at a support group, at a curriculum share, etc.--as long as the person who orders gives us the Friend's name and email address to send the vouchers to.

(12) CQLA Friendship Vouchers are earned from and applied to CQLA book purchases only, not Spelling Notebook, Teacher's Guides, videos, cassettes, or other TFT products.

(13) For those CQLA users who desire to get even more CQLA for free or who desire to vend and sell CQLA themselves, look into our CQLA Representative Program.

#### **4.Cottage classes for Fall '07: Schedule Announced for NE Indiana Classes**

We are planning for our fall cottage class—which is no small feat working around our kids' (many of our teachers) college schedules, ministry times, etc.! We are posting a tentative class schedule. You may obtain a registration form by emailing Jonathan. The writing classes will more than likely fill up quickly because they have space limits, so register for those early.

In addition to the FW (the Chapel) classes listed below, we have Geometry, Biology, and Chemistry here at our house, too. Call for more information about those classes.

The Chapel in FW—Thursday afternoons—Fall 2007 Semester

12:00-1:30

-High School Composition—Donna

-Elementary/Middle School Speech—Donna

1:30-3:00

-Junior High Composition—Donna

-Accounting—Ray

3:00-4:30

-Beginning Elementary Composition—Donna

-Beginning Speech and Debate (3:00-6:00—at-cost class; low fees)—Ray & Kara

-Advanced Speech—Joshua

4:30-6:00

-Upper Elementary Composition—Donna

-Beginning Speech and Debate (second half of three hour class)—Ray & Kara

-Literary Analysis--Joshua

## **5. Language Arts Teaching Help: Host a Language Arts Workshop in Your Area**

If you live only several hours from us (or farther if your group can help with our expenses), we would love to come and do our all day language arts workshop! I teach for six hours on teaching reading, language arts overview, study skills and comprehension, outlining and pre-writing strategies (including how to do a Key Word Outline and how to write from more than one source), several report and essay types, grammar tips, and revising/editing techniques. Additionally, we can do a CQLA demonstration of me teaching a weekly CQLA lesson to two students, if desired. We provide a detailed binder of handouts with samples of all of the outlining, writing, and revising items shared, so Moms can go home and begin implementing the skills learned right away. Contact us for more information.

## **Section II: Kitchen and Household Organization Helps**

### **1. In the Kitchen: Camping and Motel Meals, Part I**

One of the loops I am on recently had discussion going about camping and motel meals—and just general traveling foods. I am pasting my suggestions below. This month I have general tips. Next month, I will send the recipes that some of the ladies submitted.

1. Precook anything you can, especially meats. Meats last longer when they are cooked than raw—even in refrigeration. We have often fried up hamburger patties, grilled chicken breasts, etc., froze them, then took them with us. They are ready to use, hopefully heated somewhere in a microwave, electric skillet, or crock pot. Egg skillets can be cooked over a fire in no time if you have pre-cooked hash browns and meat to toss in with the eggs.
2. Consider canned meat as well. Some soup recipes that call for cooked ground beef could also be made with canned chicken or canned beef (though our Amish store does have canned ground beef that isn't too bad or too outrageously priced). Generally, canned meats are often expensive (though less so at the wholesale club or the Amish store I shop at); however, they are still cheaper than eating out---and we usually use them as part of the whole entree (i.e. in the case of soups, tacos, casseroles, etc.), which reduces the total cost of the meal.
3. Freezer meals (in ziplocks that do not take up as much space) stay frozen in coolers---and act as ice for the non-frozen items. It's simple to dump the contents of a freezer entree into the crock pot and go--whether it's sandwich fillings, stews, etc. Many times we have put these frozen entrees into the crock pot in our motel in the morning, went sight seeing or playing for the day, and came back to hot stew, etc., reducing the number of times in a day that we had to eat out. (Check your motel's rules for leaving electrical appliances plugged in while away.)
4. Overall, think canned when you are able to. I am amazed how quickly our cooler(s) fill up when we go anywhere. If you are truly going to have entire entrees in a crock pot, electric

skillet, etc., your cooler will fill up quickly. Look at recipes that have fresh ingredients and consider what canned items you could use. Many entrees (albeit, not the healthiest ones!) can be prepared with mostly or all canned foods (i.e. veggies, meat, broth, etc.)

5. Canned tuna packs easily if most family members like it. Just be sure you just bring a new, unopened, small jar of Miracle Whip for whipping up tuna salad—and either use up or discard the tuna salad and the leftover dressing when finished. Temperatures in a cooler are not consistent enough to keep items made with Miracle Whip or mayo very long.
6. Consider pre-made entrees in cans (if you can stand some of them!). Yes, it's expensive, but still not as much as eating out. We have taken cans of beef stew with us before and not minded those at all (though anything with canned pasta is out of the question!). Canned entrees, such as beef stew or dumplings, can be heated up in a microwave, crock pot, or electric skillet quickly.
7. We like to pack small, individual packages of cold meat so that when they are opened, they are usually used up, rather than put back into the cooler. They are not as good as deli meat, but they are convenient, have less spoilage, etc.
8. Put boxes of things or bags of things (crackers, chips, etc.) down into zip locks (unopened; the entire bag) when you pack it. That way, when it gets opened, you can zip the ziplock and not have to worry about the open bag/box spilling everywhere. (If you just pack the items down in zip locks, you will have the ziplocks handy when you need them.)
9. New---Have you seen those way cool XL and XXL Zip lock bags? The pictures on the box show the gal loading up sports gear, bedding, and more in these huge zip locks. I am a connoisseur of fine zip-type bags, so these caught my attention (and sent my mind whirling with all of the possibilities!) immediately. When we pack non-perishable food, we usually use tubs; however, for non-squishable (?) things, these bags would be great, wouldn't take up as much space as tubs, and you can see at a glance what they contain (instead of digging through labeled tubs (like one in my garage is right now from a trip long ago!))--paper products and breads--only to find that the breads aren't really there!
10. Consider purchasing part of the meal and eating the other out of the cooler, if some place inexpensive is available to get things. For example, sometimes we will take deli meat, our own cookies and fruit, etc. for a picnic, but pick up a few pounds of broasted potatoes at Walmart or a grocery (for just a few dollars). I like to do this, especially, when I feel like we are not eating real food very much (how I feel at debate tournaments when we pack cold meat, fruit, and salad for three days in a row--all meals!). Even though some of those things are "real," I have a personal aversion to eating cold food only for too long a period of time.

Speaking of unheated foods, we almost always take string cheese, boiled eggs, bananas, and peanuts every time we go to a tournament or home school convention. We have some quick protein at the very least.

## 4. 2. Organizing Tip: “Oprah Calls It Multi-Tasking”

I am always amazed at the fronts of magazines when I am in line at the grocery store. Obviously, the scandalous behavior of stars is...well, scandalous. But what has been surprising me lately is how women’s magazines are trying to teach women the skills that we homeschoolers have learned many years ago....because we had to. Now there are “freezer entrée stores” popping up for women to go and make freezer meals. There are hints and tips galore on helping kids with homework (which most of us have already learned through trial and error). And then there are dozens of organization strategies—many of which homeschooling moms already discovered years ago—and now the world is trying to learn them.

One of these is multi-tasking. Magazines and help books and shows act as though this is some new concept. Ha! We homeschooling moms invented multi-tasking! We grade a math page while listening to a little one read aloud. We wash dishes while giving spelling words. We put on our make-up while driving. Oops...I mean while stopped at traffic lights. Anyway, you get the picture!

And now, we not only multi-task, but we teach our children to do it also. How many times do we have them learn from a story tape or teaching tape while they cut vegetables? How often do we read aloud to them while they sort socks? We teach our daughters to make two entrees instead of one, and stick one in the freezer.

Multi-tasking is not something Oprah just came up with! I am proud when I see these article titles, knowing that we, homeschooling moms, invented such a hot topic—and that it’s not such a new phenomenon after all! ☺

## Section III: Language Arts and Homeschooling Helps

### 1. CQLA Help: How Is Each Level of CQLA Multi-Level Within the Level?

#### How is CQLA multi level within the levels?

CQLA has four levels of books: Level Pre A (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level); Level A (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade level); Level B (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade level); and Level C (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade level). Within each of those levels there are three breakdowns that you decide at which level your student will work: Basic level--Basic (those just beginning that level); Extension level---E (those who have done that level before or are further in their language arts studies than a Basic student); and Further Extension---FE (those who are furthest in their language studies of that book’s level).

The levels within the levels (Basic, Extension, and Further Extension) are based on *applications* of the skills learned. Here are some examples of this application:

In spelling, when students learn the I before e, except after c rule, a Basic student in level B might have to learn to spell the words believe, receive, and rein. Extension students would have those words as well as believable, receipt, and grievous. Further Extension students would have all of those words, plus some that break that week's spelling rules.

In grammar, all students might be required to write with double and triple adjectives in sentences, but the E and FE students will be required to use double and triple adjectives that they have never used in writing before (using a thesaurus).

In the Editor Duty assignments (the part of each weekly lesson in which students find errors in paragraphs), the Basic students only find errors in one paragraph; E's find them in two paragraphs; FE's find them in three---and the errors get increasingly difficult in each paragraph. (For example, a Basic Level B student might have to find a punctuation error in a subordinate clause opener sentence, but an FE student (since he has probably had two years of CQLA and has learned about subordinate clauses in various places) would have to find punctuation errors in the last paragraph that are not just in subordinate clause openers, but also in subordinate clauses in the middle and end of sentences.

In composition, more advanced students have to do the following: 1) Write more sentences; 2) Write sentences that contain advance sentence structures (dialogue, for instance); 3) Write openers and closers when the younger students do not; etc. Upper level students are required to use more sources, write more paragraphs, etc.

In editing via the Checklist Challenge (CC), the level differences really come into play as this is one of the primary *applications* of all grammar and language arts learning: applying it to the student's writing. In the CC for a given week, a Basic student may be asked to add a quotation to his essay; an Extension student may have to write two quotations by two different speakers; a Further Extension student may have to write using a split quotation.

The differences in levels within the levels continue as the student takes his spelling test and dictation quiz at the end of the week. Basic students take spelling tests over the words they were given and the dictation quiz over the first copy box; Extension students have the Basic words and the Extension words and take a dictation quiz over two of the copy boxes; Further Extension students have all of the spelling words and take dictation over all copy boxes.

## **2. Homeschooling Tip: Projects for Studying Struggle in Nature (Vera Berry)**

Vera Berry, a dear fellow homeschooling mom who has been writing and assembling homeschooling tips, has agreed to allow me to include some of her

tips in our E-Newsletter. Since many of you will be doing the CQLA unit on persecution, suffering, and/or joy this fall, I thought I would start with her tip containing projects for studying struggle in nature. Thank-you Vera, for your wealth of homeschooling knowledge, experience, and enjoyment!

From Vera:

We are studying the process of birth with the struggles of coming into this world. I was hoping to do a project with chicken egg, and I may still do it. When I did it with my older children, it was one of my all time favorite projects. We had such fun watching those eggs hatch and the little chicks coming into life. Plus, we got a full show of the struggles of coming into the world. Then, we gave the babies back to the farmer.

Another project that I did before that I wanted to repeat is that of the butterfly. I know you can buy a kit from the local school supply store, as well as many homeschool providers and "educational" toys catalogs. You buy the box, and then you send off for the caterpillar, although from time to time we have found our own caterpillars in our garden.

Next, I considered putting some banana out and letting some fruit flies attract to it and watch their metamorphosis. That sounded like a good idea. And definitely in my price range.

But once again, God had another plan. See I have been wanting for a long time to feed my fish brine shrimp only I didn't know how or where to buy them. I was in PetSmart though, and lo and behold, they had brine shrimp in a little bottle. They are dried. You put them in some sea salt water (not the iodized kind), and in twenty-four to forty-eight hours, you have shrimp. I broke out one of my favorite homeschool supplies--and microscope, and we have been watching brine shrimp all day. My children are so excited about having babies. Can you imagine? (You

can tell we are deprived!) Every hour or so, they are back at the microscope observing the eggs to see what is going on. I am glad to see them eager to learn. The thing is that I didn't plan that. I was just doing something I had wanted to do (get shrimp for my fish), and it worked out that God had a teaching moment that fit exactly what we were doing. And I didn't even have to deal with the bugs! :)

## **Section IV: Heart Helps**

### **1. Heart-Training Tip: What Else Do You Have to Spend Your Life On?**

#### **2.**

At a recent homeschool convention, when Ray and I were speaking about our Top Twenty Pieces of Advice From Twenty Years of Homeschooling, I was telling the parents that if you can just set aside more of your time, talents, and energy to get your children's hearts--and keep them--it isn't really that long. Then I said, "Giving up many hobbies and activities to give them my time. Giving up much money and "things" to give them a quality education and opportunities. Giving up sleep and "umph" that needs funneled into their lives. Giving up emotional and spiritual energy to help them reach their potential in the Lord. When you think about it, it's just a small part of your life. Like for me, I started this journey twenty-four years ago when Joshua was a baby, and I'll still be doing it ten years from now, when Jakie is a senior in high school. That's only....well, thirty-four years of pouring myself into my kids--disciplining them, disciplining them, training them, teaching them. Well, it's a long time for me, but it might not be that long for those of you with less children." When I realized that it truly is a long period of time--and a substantial part of my life--- I said a most poignant thing (for me anyway!): "What else do you have to spend your life on?"

And I ask that everyday of myself now...and am asking it to readers of this newsletter. So, we give up things to take this homeschool journey. So we give up even more to truly take the time to reach their hearts and disciple them for Jesus Christ. But what else do we have to spend our lives on? I mean, we could have

more hobbies, accumulate more money and things, travel more, enjoy more relaxation....but he who loses his life for Christ's sake will find it. I can't think of anything more worthy or more fruitful (compare one-on-one, lifelong discipleship with children we have taught or trained with other less-fruitful attempts). **What else do you have to spend your life on?**

## 1. 2. Character Tip: Playing Is a Reward for Diligence, Part I

We just began our “summer school schedule,” though we are still wrapping up our final language arts classes that we hold to test our programs. I am always anxious to start summer school for a number of reasons: 1) I generally do not teach outside classes in the summer, so I have more time to do fun things with the kids and to write; 2) It is lighter, less pressured, than the academic year—after all, you don’t have to do it if you don’t want to (!); 3) It is a fun change of pace—what could be a more fun and interesting school day than library hopping all day or being read to while you build with Legoes!; (or than gardening, doing 4-H projects you adore, learning new skills that the school year didn’t allow time for...etc. etc.); and 4) When I feel like I haven’t met my goals or done as good of a job in certain areas during the school year, I know I’ll have a chance to redeem myself in summer school!

Anyway, Josiah, age twelve, just said today, “I’m so excited about summer and doing summer school.”

Kara, age sixteen said, “You don’t hear that often—I mean the excited about summer school part.”

It didn’t surprise me; kids can get excited about the most normal and “less thrilling things” if their parents are excited too. What stopped me in my tracks was the immense wisdom that followed when he said, “I can’t imagine not doing summer school. What would you do all day long?”

I said, “You would do a couple of chores then play all day.”

He answered, and this is my character tip for the month, “It would be terrible to have everyday all summer to play only. *Playing is a reward for getting things done!*”

Out of the mouths of babes!

I am not advocating that everyone do summer school every day. I am not saying you have to do things just like the Reishes do. I would never pressure anyone into not taking a needed break, etc., but his words ring true, and we should remember them while we are developing our summer activities schedule: *Playing is a reward for completing other things.*

You see, we live in a play-minded, thrill-saturated world. Don’t get me wrong. I love fun. I love to have fun. I love to make fun. I am a cool, fun mom! And a cool, fun tutor! This week, I am taking my testing students (all fifteen of them!) out for a big pizza party followed by an afternoon

matinee. (After all, they've earned fun after coming to class and working hard on CQLA every week.) I am not a prude when it comes to fun. However, *fun is a reward for completing other things*. It is not what our lives—or our children's lives—should be founded on.

We have been developing character workshops that I am so excited about. I presented the first three hours of it at a Mom's Day Out last month, and it was incredibly rewarding. One of the most common themes I hear from parents when we speak about character, diligence training, scheduling chores, etc. (anywhere, not necessarily at that particular workshop) is that "my child just wants to have fun all the time." The question follows: "How can I train him to be more diligent? To not insist on playing constantly? To love work and learning?"

And the answer is obvious: *We cannot train our children to enjoy work, school, serving others, the daily grind, etc. while we are busy training them to love play and frivolities.*

When we have character problems, Ray always tells me that we are getting the behavior we have expected and allowed. No where does this ring true more than in the area of diligence and play-mindedness. (Don't tell him I said he was sort of right about that "getting the behavior we expect and allow" thing! ☺)

When we do the following things, we are training them to love play and frivolities (and not training them to love work and learning): We buy them electronic gadgets and gizmos galore; after all, they cannot be without a thrill for even a few minutes. We expect that they cannot enjoy reading a book, listening to a tape, or talking in the vehicle while we travel for an hour or two somewhere—so we get them IPODS to watch movies on or at the very least, use the DVD player in the minivan. We practically apologize for asking them to do household tasks—then ask as little as possible so as not to have an argument about it. We allow them to do school for three hours in the morning, then have free time (for "play") all afternoon. We fill their evenings with play dates, hanging out, and sports (in part so we won't have to deal with their bad attitudes). And on and on. Those things are training in the opposite of building character! *Those are training in slothfulness, love of things and frivolities—and, most of all, selfishness.* There is a place for play--as reward for doing what we are supposed to be doing.

## **Section V: Article**

### **"I Want a Oompa Loompa Now, Daddy Part I of III"**

#### **" I Want a Oompa Loompa Now, Daddy! Part I"**

##### **Or Avoiding a Child-Controlled Home**

In the original movie, *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, an extremely naughty girl finds herself in a lot of trouble because, quite frankly, she is spoiled rotten. She asks for everything,

and if she does not get what she wants when she wants it, she throws a ten-year-old tantrum. Her indulgent father continuously gives in to her, even to the point of trying to talk Mr. Wonka into selling him one of the Oompa Loompas, the pint-sized candy makers from Loompa Land, for his dear Veruca as she cries out, "I want a Oompa Loompa now, Daddy!"

### **Parent-Controlled or Child-Controlled?**

Nowadays, children controlling their parents seems to be a natural occurrence. It is joked about on talk shows, from church pulpits, in beauty parlors, and at doctors' offices. Nobody seems to know what to do about the fact that children, not parents, seem to call the shots.

Recently I was in a mall during the daytime when I overheard two young mothers talking to each other and their preschool children. One of the mothers told the children to come along because they were going to get a snack. The second mother questioned her, wondering if they were having lunch or a snack because she had planned on eating lunch. The first mother responded in a whisper with, "Oh, yeah, we're having lunch. I just tell my kids we're having a snack because if they think we are having a meal, they won't come to eat."

As I was thinking to myself about the state of parenting in the secular world today, I heard a similar story soon after about a Christian mom who writes a marriage and parenting column for a Christian publication. In line at McDonald's, this gal asked her friend what her six and seven year old children were getting in their Happy Meals. She continued, "I have to be sure to get my kids exactly what your kids have in their Happy Meals or everything will break loose."

Why do parents (and especially Christian parents) walk on egg shells with their children? Why are they afraid to "cross" them? Why are they weak and unable to set the rules and guidelines for their family?

### **The World's Parenting Philosophy vs. The Bible's Parenting Philosophy**

The world (via the media, secular parenting specialists, fellow parents, and others) tells us that we cannot have control of our children. It paints a bleak picture about parenting children: try to stay firm on the battles you know you can win, and let the others go.

Do we have to go through our children's growing up years wishing they would behave like we tell them to? Do we have to beg, cajole, or bargain with our children to get them to sit down at the table or be content with what they have? Can we ever really enjoy our children, or does every command from us have to result in a battle?

Clearly, Scripture paints an entirely different picture of parenting than the world does. The Bible tells children to honor and obey their parents. It tells us parents to train our children. It tells us to discipline our children. It tells us to love our children. It even tells us that disciplining our children is loving them---and not disciplining them is hating them.

Of course, this doesn't happen overnight (but neither did the child-controlled home). Obviously, if we start out being in charge from the beginning and train our toddlers and preschoolers in obedience, having school aged children (then teenagers) who obey and love us has more chance of being a reality.

### **Obedience Is Better Than Sacrifice**

The issue of obedience in our young children was illuminated for us early on in our parenting

when we had the smartest, most clever, most verbal, and most darling three year old son there ever was! We were diligent in teaching him God's Word as we had been taught we should do from our circle of friends even before we were married. However, this little prodigy who could recite the kings of Judah and the kings of Israel simultaneously did not come the first time we called him. He did not pick up his toys when we told him to. He did not stay in his bed when we put him there at night. In short, he did not obey us all the time---or even the majority of the time.

About this same time, we heard teaching about obedience and character in children, and we realized that we were focusing on knowledge with Joshua, not wisdom. We realized that we were so proud of his ability to learn and articulate that we had focused on that more than character (and obedience). We quickly put learning and "education" on the back burner and turned our attention to training our little boy biblically.

Oh, how thankful I am for that early lesson. It became the basis for our entire parenting (and home schooling) philosophy: godliness before knowledge; character ahead of education; obedience instead of sacrifice; relationship over religion; and on and on. We still (and continued to with all of our children) taught him the Bible and its principles, but we focused more on the application of the Word rather than learning (and showing off!) mere facts. (And putting academics behind character training throughout his life didn't seem to hurt him--a couple of years ago he received a BA in History--after testing out of all but two classes that were not available for testing!)

I love what I have learned from books by Gary Ezzo and Kevin Leman about Biblical (and effective) discipline. They have helped me focus on punishment when needed (instead of fads or formulas) and reality discipline, or consequences, (instead of ineffective gimmicks). While there is much more to training children in God's ways (discussed in other articles at our website), one of the major aspects (and certainly one of the earliest) is that of Biblical discipline. The two basics of Biblical discipline that we have found include punishment and consequences.

## **Punishment**

For us, the first aspect of Biblical discipline has meant explaining what is expected (to keep from exasperating our children) and punishing when these expectations were not met---just like the Scriptures tell us to. Of course, it is not always as simple as that, but that is the basis of punishing for disobedience. Biblical discipline is not tricking, bribing, begging, screaming, hitting, threatening, or spoiling. Biblical discipline is giving a command, expecting it to be followed, and punishing when it is not followed.

Of course, knowing how to punish effectively is the other side of the coin. Two methods of punishment that are not effective are those of delayed obedience---or letting children have time to decide to obey and threatening without following through.

When Cami (our third child) was just under five, we lived back a long, long lane out in the country. At the beginning of the lane lived a family with a little boy who was also five. Occasionally, this little boy would come down to play with Cami---but he never wanted to go home when it was time.

One evening at dinner, after this neighbor boy had been down playing in the yard with Cami, she started to describe to the family around the dinner table his mom's disciplinary technique. Now I will forever keep this moment in my "mind's picture gallery" because Cami was a giggler when she was little---so I captured many giggles and put them altogether into one darling, forever "giggle picture" of her in my mind.

Anyway, Cami could barely get the first sentence of her news out because she was laughing so much, her eyes big and her sweet little hand covering her giggles as she exclaimed, "You'll never

believe what Billy's mom does when he disobeys!"

"What?" we questioned.

"She....she...(giggle, giggle)..she COUNTS!"

Then she went on in great detail and with great animation to describe the scene to us: "She told him it was time to get his bike and head home, and he said he didn't want to (like he always does)"---she's saying this all really fast yet matter-of-factly while she giggles---"and she said he had to, and he said no again, and she said not to make her tell his dad, and he said no again"---"and then she looked real serious and she started COUNTING!! " Giggle, giggle---what a dolly...

When she recovered from her giggling, she asked, "How does counting make someone obey?"

We explained this child training technique to all the children---how when a parent begins counting, it means it's the last straw and the child has to obey by a certain number or else.

Then she and her younger sister, older sister, and older brother began giving each other commands, "Put your hands on your lap," "Pass the salt," and "Give me your butter bread," then counting after the command was given to see if counting made a person obey. It was actually hilarious to see them, and it brought out the absurdness of counting to get obedience.

Of course, this led to a lesson on first time obedience and how Mommy and Daddy should never have to say it over and over to get them to obey--and we should *never* have to count.

Biblical discipline is not one of game playing. We should give our children commands and expect them to obey them cheerfully. We should not have to resort to begging or bribing. When we realized that Joshua needed training in obedience more than he needed training in Bible facts, we began expecting him to do what we said. When he didn't do what he was told, he was punished for it.

### **Who Makes the Decisions for the Children?**

I can still remember vividly a time when we were trying to get a handle on Joshua's behavior that I was questioning biblical discipline and wavering some on whether more "modern" techniques might be appropriate. One time, during my doubting weeks, I called Joshua to come to allow me to put on his coat. He didn't come right away, and I remembered an article I had read in a parenting magazine about talking sweetly, giving the explanation, acting nonchalant about their disobedience, etc., so I tried it. I had his coat in my hand as I told him that I really needed for him to come, so we could leave. I told him that if he didn't come soon, we would be late. I spoke in soft, sweet tones. Then I sat on the couch and acted like it didn't really matter to me whether he came right away or not. Suddenly, I looked down at the coat in my hand and thought about what I was doing and realized how foolish it was.

Joshua was training me rather than the other way around! There I sat on the couch, unable to leave, because my little one did not want to. I was allowing an immature preschooler to dictate our schedule rather than me.

In essence, that is what we do when we do not punish our children, but let them do things their way or do what they want instead of what we want. We are letting someone without the maturity and wisdom to make decisions about himself (when to go to sleep, what to eat, what to wear, etc.) if he decides he wants to. Our children are given to us parents as babies and then grow into children because they are foolish and unable to take care of themselves (i.e. to make decisions on their own). God expects us to take care of them and make decisions for them---not let them do

that for themselves simply to avoid tantrums.

Of course, I am not opposed to explaining why I want a certain behavior--but a child should not have to have an explanation in order to obey. I explain what I want and why for two reasons: (1) to keep him from becoming exasperated; and (2) to give him something to put in his "moral bank" for future reference. These early explanations are the foundation for later character training.

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Watch this space in June for Part II: Disobedience or Childishness? Benchmarks for Determining Disobedience and Childishness; Biblical Basis for Reality Discipline  
And in July, Part III: Large Family Discipline; Taking Back Control; A Baker's Dozen Discipline Tips

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