

Chapter 1



Managers of Their Chores

“From a very young age I had daily responsibilities. I remember standing on the stool drying dishes, folding clean laundry, and dusting. My parents had a weekly job chart for us that rotated some of the chores. For example, as the oldest daughter I was in charge of getting my youngest brother ready to go when we were going places. Privileges were linked to completion of chores. I was prepared for my role as a wife, mother, and homemaker.” Prepared-for-life Mom

“I did not have any chore responsibility growing up. I have been married for fifteen years this summer. We have always struggled with order in our home. We now have six children, ages twelve, nine, seven, two, and six-month-old twins. I continually have discouragement over my inability to keep up with the daily chores. What seems to be natural to some friends is a total mystery for me. I feel confident in my teaching our children in many areas, but in the home-chores department, I still feel great inadequacy. I think my biggest challenge is that I am trying to train our children while I am in the middle of learning how to run a home.” Unprepared-for-life Mom

Two stories; two moms; two families; two outcomes. One felt prepared for the life that would fill the majority of her years. The other has struggled with lack of home-management skills and discouragement that accompanies this problem. Both moms point back to the key role that chores, or not doing chores, has played in their lives. Amazing? Yes. Simplistic? Yes. True? Yes. We will impact the futures of our children by whether we choose to have them do chores in our home or allow them to be free from these kinds of responsibilities throughout their childhood years. We will prepare them for adult life, or we will hinder them.

Scripture lays a strong foundation directing us toward the importance of work and service. Proverbs suggests we look at ants and learn from them what it means to be responsible and work. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:6-8).

We see in the New Testament that Jesus calls believers to a life of service. “If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither

Chapter 4



Current Benefits of Chores

The Maxwells are blessed by our children's work ethic, and we attribute much of it to training them through chores. There will be current benefits for a child if he is a "doer of chores" through his youth, in addition to the lifetime benefits we have shared about previously. These current benefits will include some that are for the child only and others that are for the whole family. Remember, it is vitally important that we view chores as a positive influence in our children's lives, a direction for them that we want to embrace. Your motivation is very important to your success, and that is why it is good to reflect on the current benefits of chores for the child. This will help you invest the time and energy needed for your children to learn to responsibly serve in the home. These benefits come with a price. Are you willing to pay the price?

Promise of Blessing and Being Needed

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)" (Ephesians 6:1-2). Notice these verses say it is the first commandment with a promise of blessing. God has ordained special blessing for children who obey and honor their parents. These blessings are real, and they are experienced immediately in a child's life. It is not something for which he must wait. By teaching our children to cheerfully obey in doing their chores, we are heaping on them blessings. What parent would not want to bless his children? Do we believe blessing through obedience to parents to be true? If so, then it is our job to teach our children to obey us with a right attitude as they do their chores.

Chores are a source of value for a child. He is needed. He is contributing to the family. As a child he likely won't understand what this benefit does for him, but as an adult he will. His chores give him, on a child's level, greater purpose in life than simply playing. He matures and develops an attitude of helping the family, obedience to Jesus, and serving others. He grows a biblical sense of self-worth rather than what the world views as self-esteem achieved through such things as home runs and first-place ribbons.

Helping at home makes a child a depended-upon and valued part of the family team. From this, he develops a feeling of belonging and accomplishment. His chores give him the opportunity to choose obedience to his parents and to the Lord over what his flesh would want to do with his time. In making obedient decisions and completing assigned jobs, he is learning the joy found in serving versus the disappointment that comes from waiting to be served. While everyone loves to be served, a selfish mindset is never served to its satisfaction.

Chapter 9



For the Home-Management Challenged

Sometimes a chore plan is undermined because a mom really has no idea where to begin in determining what needs to be accomplished. Of course, there is a multitude of books available to help with this, but most will not address the reality of a home with children. This is particularly true if the family is home-schooling, and Mom's time is even more limited.

We want to help make your home management as easy and reasonable as possible. We would like for you to be able to have a sense of fulfillment in your role as a keeper at home. To us, this begins by having a workable chore system in place that allows you to keep up with your homemaking responsibilities.

The truth is that home responsibilities are usually unmanageable because time hasn't been invested to determine what needs to be done, and time hasn't been set aside to then do it. We allow ourselves to become too busy and distracted by other good things, but it is to the detriment of our first calling from Titus 2:4-5 to love our husbands, love our children, and be keepers at home. Managing home chores allows us to fulfill all three of those biblical directives for a wife and mother.

Fairly early in her mothering, Teri discovered that living in a home with children around all day meant there needed to be a high level of organization in the home. If this wasn't true, everything quickly fell into complete chaos, looking like there was no hope of recovery. The mess, disorganization, and lack of control were very discouraging to Teri. She began first to learn how to utilize her time to keep up with the workload, and then to utilize her little helpers as well.

In the midst of this education was the reality that a home with children in it all day would not have the same standard of cleanliness or orderliness that it would if it were just Steve and Teri. There needed to be a livable balance, which was only achievable through having a schedule, making a chore plan, and teaching the children what they needed to do. It was truly a management process. Instead of being a manager in a work environment, Teri was a manager eventually with eight children reporting directly to her.

The joy and peace a mom feels in her heart when she is keeping up with her home chores is worthy of doing what it takes to get there. Our goal is to convince you that you will be benefited and blessed to take the plunge and determine to overcome whatever hindrances you have had in this area.