

Who's Driving the School Bus Anyway?

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Perched up high in our beloved 11 passenger van, I sat with eyes shut tight, one hand gripping the side of my seat, the other reaching frantically for the non-existent bar above my window. "Please don't drive so close to the edge," I cried out to my husband, who, in fact, seemed oblivious to any danger on the two-way highway. Just when I started to relax, I saw the red taillights of the vehicle in front of us. I cringed as we drew closer to the other car's bumper before stopping abruptly. "Why do you have to get so close and wait so long to stop?" I wailed as I pulled my sweater up over my head.

I was not really asking for the reasons why; I was merely signifying that he must have temporarily lost his head and forgotten the rules of the road. My husband patiently explained that the car ahead should have started moving sooner and that he was just hoping not to waste the van's energy by stopping sooner than necessary. I wasn't laughing.

My stomach finally started to relax its churning when I noticed that we were not taking the route that was familiar. "Shouldn't you be turning here?" I submissively suggested. No. Not today. We were taking the scenic route. And, it is usually very scenic.

With all my commenting about his driving, it's a wonder that my husband makes it to work and back everyday without me!

Just why are men so aggressive when it comes to driving? All the books on men tell us that it is because they are born to lead and made to race. Well, okay, but not when I am in the car, please. I think the better question here would be just why is it that I think that my husband must drive like I do or else he is not driving the right way?

The physical example of trying to "drive" our husbands finds its way into our home and homeschools as well, doesn't it? Do you find yourself questioning your husband's leadership abilities? Do you think he has forgotten to look ahead, or forgotten to look behind, or maybe even forgotten the direction you're supposed to be going?

I have too, from time to time, and in my arrogance, I've let him know a thing or two about how much help I could use and why doesn't he see the needs as clearly as I do. I have wondered (loudly) if he will ever takeover some of the schooling responsibilities or at least care enough to look at what I'm trying to do with the kids. What a putrid attitude and how despicable in the eyes of God! So just what is valuable in the sight of God?

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:3, 4

In learning gentleness and quietness, I have also found much more peace. I am learning to hang on for the ride and trust the Lord to arrive at the end of the journey safely.

So how am I learning these things? Usually the hard way. In looking back, I have seen that I've not always honored my husband's plans, rather than the false assumption that he has not always helped me with my plans. Let me explain.

Over the years there have been a few things the Principal of this school has specifically asked that I make happen. Many times I didn't really want to hear what he had to say, (the pride in me causes me to secretly be upset that he thinks anything needs changing at all) I just wanted him to see my agenda and agree with it. Poor, foolish teacher.

"Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord and depart from evil." Proverbs 3:7

Let me get transparent and demonstrate where I have failed and where I have triumphed in allowing my husband to drive this school bus.

Math

The principal believed it was really important to make sure that math assignments were graded regularly. Can you believe that! On top of all the bazillion other things I had to do? Couldn't hubby just do that one thing? Looking back, I realize how wrong my attitude was compared to what the Lord desired in me. And, looking back, if I had stayed on top of grading the math lessons (which I didn't), at least one of my children wouldn't have strayed so badly in his math progress. My child has had to pay the price of my lack of respect in honoring the desires of my authority. An even higher price to pay has been re-teaching him to respect my authority when he didn't see me respecting my own authority. Ouch.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5

History

I hated history in school. But, knowing I had to teach it in my own homeschool, I tried a lot of different curriculum. Everybody I knew was using a certain "highly praised" book and I thought I needed to as well. I asked the principal his thoughts. He said to teach history starting with the Old Testament. Humph. I didn't even like to read the Old Testament. How could that possibly be what was right? Lest you think this teacher is a total loser, I did actually try and teach them from the Old Testament and boy did we learn a lot! What I thought would be boring actually taught me so much for life and godliness! We learned that the foundation of our faith was based on believing the Bible to be true from the very first verse, starting with creation. We learned about the Kings of Israel and what happened when they followed God or simply did what was right in

their own eyes. We learned all those cool stories about the Judges sent as deliverers. And, we learned the cycle of history that repeats itself even to this day: when people or governments forsake God and turn to idolatry(whatever form that may take), they are eventually sent into bondage. From there, they learn repentance. God hears their cry and delivers them, and they find rest. Idolatry, Bondage, Repentance, Deliverance, Rest. Look at all the major civilizations and peoples to whom this has applied. The cycle continues to repeat itself, sometimes even in my own life or in the lives of my kids.

As we took the scenic route through the Old Testament, my children learned to enjoy reading the Bible and they continue to see its relevance for today! Amazing what the Word of God (and a little humble submission to my authorities) could do in teaching me to do what was right in the sight of God and not in my own eyes.

"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Judges 17:6

"Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things in Thy law." Psalm 119:18

Language Arts

This was my specialty and I knew how to teach it, thank you very much. The principal allowed me to drive as long as I also taught the kids Latin and Greek. Right. Well, I bought the material and started it a few times, but never completed the task - ever. The kids still don't know any Latin or Greek. The fruit of my disobedience has been guilt on my part, knowing I have disappointed the Principal and His God. And on the children's part, some have poor spelling and all lack the ability to decipher a word by knowing its Latin or Greek roots. I know that if I would have honored the principal's request in this area, he would have felt respected and my children would have gained valuable knowledge. I think I better humble myself, repent, and get that curriculum out and finally follow through with it. I think the Lord just might bless that.

And, lest you think my husband is a tyrant or expects too much, I want you to know that he has been full of grace and not ever mentioned my failures. You see, it's not about whether I teach my kids Latin or Greek or not, and I wouldn't even go so far as to say that you should teach it to your children. It's about my attitude of respect before my husband and am I willing to let him lead. If I do not respect my husband's leadership how can I expect my children to respect their father?

If you view yourself as having failed, humble yourself. If the road looks too hard for you; cast all your cares on Jesus. He will make a way where there seems to be no way. Feeling low? He will lift you up in due time.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:6, 7

I used to always say, "I need help!" "I can't do this all by myself!" "I can't physically keep up with all that is demanded of me!" When I am tempted to say these things now, here is what I do:

Instead of saying, "I need help!" First, I ask the Lord to show me how to fulfill my role as being the helpmeet. My husband is not the helpmeet--I am. Maybe I am putting too much burden on myself and what my husband is asking is really easier. Then, I humbly go before my husband and listen to his advice.

Instead of saying, "I can't do this all by myself!" I am learning to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." The right curriculum doesn't strengthen me. The right method doesn't strengthen me. Christ strengthens me when I come to Him.

Instead of saying, "I can't physically and emotionally keep up with all that's demanded of me!" I yoke up with Jesus who said He will teach me to be gentle and humble and promised rest for my soul. Instead of needing more hands, I need more of Him. And, when I draw near to Him and ask for wisdom and strength, He provides it. Are you weary and heavy laden with the burden of homeschooling? Get to know Jesus Christ; He wants to teach you that He is gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your soul.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

Special Needs

I have one child that tends to take up a lot of time and energy. For years I struggled with this child to stay with the program. God created this one different and I had no idea the road to take. What worked for the other kids didn't work for this one. This required many trips to the principal's office. He kept saying that all he wanted from that child is for them to be able to read, write, do math and love the Lord. Through this they would learn order and character. Why did I keep making it so difficult on myself and the child by expecting more? I finally listened, relaxed and slowed down. Amazingly, they have now gained speed, improved in character, and are ready for more. All that worry and anxiety for naught, when I could have been happy with the principal's wisdom.

"Happy is the man that finds wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." Proverbs 3:13

Chores

This was seriously hard for me to let go. I really believed I could do it better and faster than allowing the little ones to "help". After all, they never did it quite right. I argued with the principal, but due to his long-range vision, he continued to have the children take on more and more chores. I had to admit his genius when I came to really need all of their help during future pregnancies and other unknown stresses. He saw the future benefit of teaching children to work

when I had only seen the immediate result. The fruit is even evident at church and in the neighborhood as our children are not averse to work, but apply themselves with fervor and excellence wherever needed. I would have made wimpy, useless children had I driven that one.

*"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."
Proverbs 16:25*

The Road Ahead

My husband sees more of the big picture of our schooling than I do. I am usually stuck in the details of working it all out. He sees a goal and lays out the direction we are to go, even if he has no clue of the streets or cities we must pass, or the mountains we must climb, let alone any curriculum choices. But in seeing the goal, he is able to keep us focused on the road ahead. Some husbands want their wives to drive the bus all the time. Hey, he's the principal, so get behind the wheel and drive!

Although I have felt the failure of my attempts to drive this homeschool bus when I shouldn't have been driving, I have also learned many lessons on what is really required of me. It is really quite simple:

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6:8

To do justly, I must walk in submission and obedience to God and my husband.

To love mercy, I must not be puffed up with pride in my own agenda or decry my husband's seeming lack of knowledge.

To walk humbly with my God is to also walk humbly with my husband whether he asks me to drive the bus for him, or help him read the map.

There have been times where neither of us has known exactly which way to go and we have learned to put the following Scripture into real practice together:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5

Who's Driving the School Bus Anyway?

And just in case you were wondering who the real driver of the bus is, look here:

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Psalm 37:5

"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps." Proverbs 16:9

So rest in peace, knowing the Lord will direct your homeschooling steps. It's time to move over and let Him drive.

Biographical Information

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