

Perspectives on Staying the Course

I know moms that schedule their days in 30 minute increments and others who take each day as it comes. I know moms who can't function without a fair amount of structure and others who feel stressed by schedules and to-do lists.

Do you know which type of mom you are? I think that I'm somewhere in the middle. I'm more of a routine kind of gal than a stringent schedule keeper. The more that I can get the boys to take responsibility for staying on track, the happier I am though, so that does require me to *at least* do a little planning ahead.

No matter if your day is staying on schedule or if it careens wildly off course, you can just ask the Lord for guidance, take one step at a time, and as Elisabeth Elliot says, "Do the next thing."

I leave you with a poem that she often quoted.

Do The Next Thing

*"At an old English parsonage down by the sea,
there came in the twilight a message to me.
Its quaint Saxon legend deeply engraven
that, as it seems to me, teaching from heaven.
And all through the hours the quiet words ring,
like a low inspiration, 'Do the next thing.'*

*Many a questioning, many a fear,
many a doubt hath its quieting here.
Moment by moment, let down from heaven,
time, opportunity, guidance are given.
Fear not tomorrow, child of the King,
trust that with Jesus, do the next thing.*

*Do it immediately, do it with prayer,
do it reliantly, casting all care.
Do it with reverence, tracing His hand,
who placed it before thee with earnest command.
Stayed on omnipotence, safe 'neath His wing,
leave all resultings, do the next thing.*

*Looking to Jesus, ever serener,
working or suffering be thy demeanor,
in His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
the light of His countenance, be thy psalm.
Do the next thing."*

Enjoy every minute!

~Deborah Wuehler

If I could just go through this pile of papers on my desk that needs to be organized, I might be able to see my computer screen better. And as I look to the right, I see those boxes from the garage that I need to go through. And remember that messy bedroom from last week's THM? Well, it's only half clean and I really want to finish that project before another friend comes to see the baby. Add to that my writing projects, Bible study homework and going through all the children's outgrown clothes and I am over my head in projects--none of which have been scheduled.

It's beyond my comprehension as to how I am going to ever get it all done. I have always thought that if I only had everything on a schedule, I'd have all my ducks in a row, and life would be smooth sailing. Problem is, those ducks don't always cooperate. They get hurt, make messes, lose their wallets, bring home ducky friends, and have plans all their own - and none of it was on my schedule!

My best laid plans and schedules (and I have some really good ones I could show you) tend to fall apart in the implementation step. It's not because I am lazy, nor is it because I am disorganized, it is simply because I have children and I have interruptions.

So, should we throw out the schedules? No. I believe we should have a framework of order (as God reveals in His creation) and a spirit of *flexibility!* Just keep doing those daily routines as much as possible, but when you have to deviate from the plan, have a spirit of grace and an anticipation of God's divine appointments added to your schedule, and then forget what is behind and go on to the next thing on the plan whenever it's possible.

I came across [this blog post](#) today that fits perfectly with what we are talking about here, plus some. If you need help with organization, I know this will bless you.

*She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.
Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be
praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.
Proverbs 31:27 - 31*

~ Deborah Wuehler

If you want a better organized day, it helps to know that many psychologists teach that it takes three weeks to form a habit. Starting with devotions or Bible study, you might decide to do that at the breakfast or dinner table, then manage to do it for 21 days (with weekends handled

differently if need be). After that time, no one will think of running off to another activity. They will wait at the table expecting the Bible study. A family habit has been formed.

Other parts of your schedule can become habitual in the same way. In schools the bell rings after 50 minutes, and students must drop a book in mid-paragraph and move on to the next subject. At home you can be more realistic. Start with broad periods such as morning clean-up chores, then a couple hours of serious sit-down home study with recesses as needed. Many homeschoolers seem to use the morning roughly that way. Details about who you work with, who works independently, and how to keep the toddlers happy all complicate the planning, but at least the broad periods are there—first chores, then study.

Afternoons usually vary more. Try habituating a quiet time when you and the young children nap while the olders are quiet. Afternoon with music practice, art or science projects, sports practice, library trips, grocery shopping, and free reading probably cannot be squeezed into a rigid schedule in many families. But gradually you can work out a few habits. For instance, if Thursday is library day, then no one will spread out their paints for a map project on Thursday.

Build enough habits to save your own sanity, but don't ring the bell every 50 minutes.

~Ruth Beechick

Biographical Information

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