

ROCKBRIDGE REPORTER

A Newsletter for Rockbridge Academy

May 2004

BEING CHRIST TO OUR CHILDREN

by Leslie Collins

The following article was presented last summer at the school's "Mothers' Desserts." We look forward to gathering again next Fall.

The job of a mother is often tedious and labor intensive. The day begins with fixing breakfast with one eye still shut, last minute ironing, and a quick kiss at the door. Often the endless list of chores to be done and errands to run leaves us wondering what it is exactly that we're supposed to be doing. The mother's position in the family is one which, if removed, the entire family will crumble; yet few can pinpoint exactly what the mother does, she just gets everything done. The Bible says that if we are a follower of Christ, then He is in us and we are in Him. Paul says that when we minister to others in His name, that it is He who is ministering. We are His body. We are His hands and feet. Whoever receives the fruits of our labors receives the work of Christ in us (1 Corinthians 12). We might think that it is a very nice idea to consider that those who are in ministry are the hands of Christ, as if this is some special gift to those super spiritual people. But Paul says we are all ministers. He makes no distinction between ministering in a pulpit and ministering in a Plymouth. "For we are God's work-



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manship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" Ephesians 2:10. God is working through us. As Christians, with Christ in us, we reflect Christ to everyone around us. "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory...." 2 Cor.3:18. Let us consider who Christ is. As we understand more of who He is, we can begin to understand who we can be, as those who are created in His image.

Christ is our Shepherd

Every atom of the universe declares the glory of God. Like the painter whose stroke becomes his signature, the Creator proclaims himself to His creation through every aspect of our lives. Mothers lives are full of many daily tasks, which seem rather ordinary and unspiritual. Yet Colossians tells us that all is one in Christ, there is no unspiritual act in the life of a believer. Let's examine one of the most beloved and well-known passages of scripture, Psalm 23, to find the significance of the work that is never done, the mother's.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

As mothers, we shepherd our children's hearts, leading them in the right way and disciplining them to avoid the rocky path. Devoted mothers do not let their children lack for anything they need, though they may wisely let them go without things they do not need (i.e., that critical pair of jeans). Devoted mothers will not let their children go hungry or cold. Neither will we let them walk over that cliff in their path. We are their shepherds.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

How often do we as mothers make our children lie down when they are

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too tired to continue? And we work so hard to give them nice warm beds. As we do this for our children, we are not merely imitating something we've seen on Trading Spaces, we are imitating our heavenly Father, our great Shepherd, who makes us lie down.

*He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.*

As creatures intended for peaceful fellowship with God, yet living in a chaotic battle between good and evil, we desire peace. Mothers often provide the solace in the storm. We bring peace to worried hearts, and Kleenex to tear-stained cheeks. We lead our children to the place where they can be refreshed and renewed to face life again. We create homes they want to be in—places of refuge. Orderly, loving homes create such solace. As creatures of an orderly God, we long for this. Mothers should work hard to provide this. Though for many, creating order is a battle, it is a battle worth fighting.

*He guides me in paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.*

As mothers, we are constantly guiding our children in paths of righteousness. We guide them in making decisions about what to wear, what to say, what to do and with whom. But for whose namesake are we guiding? The Lord is building His kingdom and He delights in using us. If we are training up the next generation to be about His kingdom, then whatever they do will have eternal value (Colossians 3:23-24). But if we are training our children to seek after their own kingdom, or our own peace and security, they will soon find that such efforts are futile. What a joy to know that if we are seeking to please the Lord in our work, it will never be in vain.

*Even though I walk through the valley of
the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me.*

A thunderstorm in the middle of the night reveals very quickly the tender heart of even the biggest child. Usually, they run to their mothers, if their mom isn't already on her way. The mother's very presence brings comfort to a child of any age. The smell of her perfume evokes peaceful reassurance. Her strong hands lead the child to safety in the arms of their heavenly Father. All is well.

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Say the word shepherd and images of a rugged-faced man in a cloak with



staff in hand and a lamb on his shoulders run through our minds. We view shepherds as gentle folk, yet they often fought lions, thieves, and other foes. Their staff was their greatest weapon. It was used to bludgeon enemies and knock foes off their feet. It was also used to protect the sheep from their greatest enemy, themselves. Sheep are not the most clever animals. An unending craving for greener pastures often leads them to the same dangerous cliffs over and over again. The shepherd uses his staff to remind the sheep not to go in unsafe territory. Similarly, mothers must protect their little lambs from themselves. The word discipline means "to teach; make one a disciple of." Hebrews 12:11 tells us, "No discipline seems pleasant at the

time but painful but later on it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace." The gentle, patient mother will discipline her child without worry because she knows that soon she will reap a great harvest. The job at times seems never ending, as children, like sheep, appear to have very short memories. Interestingly, the sheep find comfort in discipline. They are not afraid of the rod and staff; they are comforted by them. Nothing says love to a child louder than boundaries.

*You prepare a table before me in the
presence of my enemies. You anoint
my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

As the cell phones ring and the telemarketers try to get past "How are you doing today?" the mother is preparing a table for her family. She would assail all who would trespass on family time. She prepares a feast in the midst of a chaotic world. Not only does she nourish their bodies, she nourishes their souls. She sacrifices hours of her week planning, preparing, and presenting meals for her family. This sacrifice communicates the value of every person at the table in the same way that Christ's sacrifice is communicated through the feast at His table. And in the same way that Christ's redemption is not intended only to allow the redeemed to bypass the gates of Hell, but to overflow into every aspect of life. The mother's table is not lacking for good things for her family; it is overflowing.

*Surely goodness and mercy will follow
me all the days of my life, and I will
dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

The mother's job is not simply a series of unending chores; it is a ministry. Every aspect is an opportunity to reflect the servant heart of Christ. From ironing clothes to organizing classroom volunteers, the world depends on mothers. The critical

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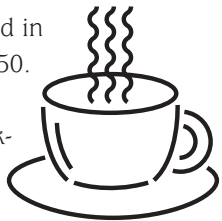
Fine Arts Night

Rockbridge Academy's annual event will be held at the Chesapeake Arts Center in Brooklyn Park, MD on Friday, May 7, 2004. The evening will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a delightful program directed by our music teachers, Mrs. Amy Ramsey and Mrs. Janet Horst. Following will be an art exhibit consisting of many masterpieces created by Rockbridge Academy students and displayed by our art teacher, Mrs. Heidi Stevens. Please join us for this special evening.



Coffee Mugs

Rockbridge Academy coffee mugs are now available for sale in the school office. They are red with Rockbridge Academy's logo etched in white and sell for \$6.50. Please look for them displayed on the bookshelf in the school office.



DR. GEORGE GRANT TO SPEAK AT ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY

Dr. George Grant will be the commencement speaker for Rockbridge Academy's first commencement exercises this coming May 28, 2004. In addition, Dr. Grant has kindly agreed to come one day early and conduct an evening seminar for parents interested in the education of their children (and who isn't?). Dr. Grant will be speaking on Thursday, May 27, 2004 (the last day of school), at **Annapolis Evangelical Presbyterian Church*** at 7:00 p.m. The title of his lecture is "Education as Repentance." Believe me, as one whose life was changed by hearing Dr. Grant speak, you won't want to miss this opportunity.



CELEBRATION DINNER

Please plan to join us at the Newton White Mansion on Thursday, May 13, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. This evening is set aside to celebrate! We will be recognizing the Rockbridge Academy teachers and staff and giving praise and thanksgiving to God for His kindness to the school.

The celebration will begin with hors d'oeuvres and drinks, followed by a sit-down dinner and a memorable presentation. You are sure to enjoy the fellowship of the Rockbridge family, while celebrating another wonderful year of accomplishments. God has been good to us indeed!

Ticket information will be forthcoming.

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time of investment in a child's life begins at birth. The rewards come as the child leaves the home and begins dwelling in the house of the Lord on his own.

That leaves 18 years or so to love, nurture, and teach a child before he leaves the home. Nearly two decades of careful investing of time, sacrificial giving, love, and purposeful teaching in Christ culminate into a child who is now an adult in search of his place in the world. While this is the goal of parenting, it is by no means the end of the task. The mother's faithful example continues to reveal Christ to her children for the rest of their lives.

So, next week when you pick up your children from school, chat quickly with your child's teacher to make sure your child's on track, volunteer to help the teacher support team for the next event, or help your child with his homework. Remember that you are reflecting Christ in each of these tasks. As Christ is the One in whom all things hold together, you have the pleasure of imitating Him as you hold your family together. Though many may not understand the significance of your position, be assured that we at Rockbridge do.

"May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN"

Hebrews 13:20-21

We chose to honor our mothers in this issue as a celebration of the upcoming Mother's Day holiday.

* Please note the change in location.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MAY 5Sports Awards Dessert at Bowie Reformed Church 7:00 p.m.
- MAY 7Fine Arts Night at Chesapeake Arts Center 7:00 p.m.
- MAY 8Senior Soirée
- MAY 13 Year-End Celebration Dinner @ Newton White Mansion 6:30 p.m.
- MAY 142-Hour Delayed Opening for School
- MAY 19-21Final Exams for Seniors
- MAY 24-26Final Exams for 7th-11th Grades
- MAY 25Annual Association Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- MAY 27Last Day of School—Awards Assembly & Field Day
- MAY 27George Grant Lecture, "Education as Repentance"
7:00 p.m. at Annapolis Evangelical Presbyterian Church
- MAY 28.....Graduation 7:30 p.m. at Stewart Hall in Sherwood Forest
- MAY 31Memorial Day—SCHOOL OFFICES CLOSED

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

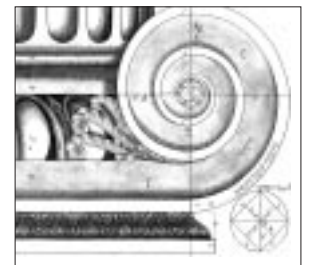
*Discernment is not
a matter of simply telling
the difference between right
and wrong; rather, it is telling
the difference between right
and almost right."*

—C. H. SPURGEON (1834-1892)

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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