

A "HOMESCHOOL HOW-TO" BOOK

# Biblical Home Education



Anne Elliott

# Introduction

Our oldest son is 24 years old, and I started looking at homeschooling methods and curriculum before he was even born. Over 20 years ago, in 1990, there were still very few homeschooling publishers or companies who were willing to sell curriculum to homeschoolers. By the time our son was born in 1995, things were starting to change dramatically. By the time he started kindergarten in 2000, choices such as Sonlight, Charlotte Mason, literature-based curriculum, and many other styles of homeschooling were all starting to grow. The Internet was beginning to catch on, especially among homeschoolers. And now, it is estimated that there are over a *million* homeschooling curriculum choices to wade through.

This is a mixed blessing! The original homeschoolers would tell you what a blessing it is to see the rise of great family-based publishers, writers who saw the needs for quality curriculum and began to produce it, and families who made the big companies jealous enough to want to start selling to homeschoolers.

But we are also faced with confusion and uncertainty. Parents who are just getting started this year in homeschooling are overwhelmed by all the choices. Yes, there are lots of websites now to help you, but to whose advice do you listen? How do you know, without wasting a lot of money, which curriculum or methods will work for your family, for your situation?

An important verse from God's Word is 2 Peter 1:3, which says,

**“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”**

One of our goals is to train our children for life and godliness, and this verse says we do that by increasing their knowledge of Him. It's comforting to know that He called us by His own glory and goodness, to know I was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Praise God!

God doesn't ever call us to a task without equipping us. His *Word* is how we gain knowledge of Him. When we use the Scriptures as our instruction manual, His *divine power* will flow through us to give us everything else we need.

Let's examine the Bible carefully to see if it will guide us through all the choices and confusion, to a choice that will line up with His Word.

1. First, we'll see if the Bible has any **goals** for us. Are there things God says clearly that we're supposed to do as parents?
2. Second, we'll look at homeschooling **methods**. Do the popular philosophies of homeschooling line up with biblical methods of parenting?
3. Finally, we'll look at how to choose homeschooling **curriculum** that will help us reach our goals. Does the Bible go so far as to recommend specific ways to teach our children?

I recommend that you have your Bible with you throughout. You'll especially want to have your Bible open to Deuteronomy, God's "parenting book." You will gain the most from this study if you read and re-read God's instructions, straight from His Word.

May the God of all peace fill your heart and home with His grace and love!

~Anne



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# **Part One**

## **Biblical Goals and Philosophy**

# Chapter One

## Two Goals

Let's start with some goals for homeschooling. I've got some familiar verses to start with. These aren't just good goals for homeschoolers; these are good goals for all parents!

2 Timothy 2:15 says,

**“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”**

As parents, our first goal is to train up children who are good workers who can correctly handle the Word of Truth.

We want our children to have a good, working knowledge of God's Word, so that they can go out into a lost world, capable of sharing God's light with lost people, protected from the wiles of the devil because they are filled to overflowing with Scripture. They're capable workers, hammering and sawing with the best of materials, building up the body of Messiah.

This is one of the reasons why God gives us children in the first place. Malachi 2:15 says God is seeking godly offspring. He wants us to reproduce ourselves—no, multiply ourselves—through our children. But it is no good to just multiply if we will not also train them up in righteousness.

However, our goals should not be so short-sighted that they stop with our children. We also desire to send our children out into the world, to share the gospel—the good news—with others.

In Luke 1:17, the angel tells Zechariah the reason that his son John was to be born:

**“And he will go on before YHVH,<sup>1</sup> in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for YHVH.”**

One of the purposes of John the Baptist’s ministry was to go before Yeshua, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to help prepare the hearts of the people of Israel for the coming kingdom of heaven.

Why does it say he would come in the spirit and power of Elijah? Who was Elijah? He was the prophet who went before wicked King Ahab, and before the rebellious, idolatrous people of Israel, and he confronted them on their sin and told them to repent. Only when they were willing to repent of their sin and turn to the true God were their hearts **prepared and ready** for God to come and heal their land.

**Your job as a parent is to do the same thing in your home.** You can’t force your children to repent of their sin and trust in Yeshua the Messiah to save them from their sin. Oh, you wish you could guarantee that they would trust Yeshua!<sup>1</sup> But you can’t guarantee that, can you? It’s a personal decision that they have to make. They have to personally repent and turn to God.

But here’s what you *can* do. You can prepare their hearts. God wants to turn the hearts of fathers and mothers to their children. He wants those parents to show disobedient children (which they all are!) the wisdom of the righteous—that’s the Bible, right? Why? To “make ready a people prepared for YHVH.” You can prepare your children to follow Yeshua their Master and to be ready for His return by teaching them “the wisdom of the righteous,” as Luke 1:17 says.

Do you remember the parable of four different kinds of soil, described in Matthew 13? One of the loftiest goals of homeschooling is to help prepare the soil of your children’s hearts, so that they are “good soil” that will produce fruit.

Our goal is to prepare their hearts, so that God’s Word is implanted into good soil, so that they grow up to become workers who don’t need to be ashamed,

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<sup>1</sup> YHVH is a shortened form of writing the Creator’s name, Yehovah or Jehovah. Yeshua is the Hebrew form of the name Jesus. For more explanation, see <https://anneelliott.com/2015/11/pure-lips>.



workers who can go out to preach repentance in our world, preparing hearts everywhere they go, carefully handling the Word of God.

Practically speaking, this means that I will do the most “soil preparation” in the youngest years. Those are the years to hide God’s Word in their hearts so that they will not sin against Him, as Psalm 119:11 says. As they grow, I need to begin reproducing myself in them, so that by the time they’re grown, they will have the skills and abilities they’ll need to share the gospel. Can you see how this will affect what things will be taught to them day in and day out?

# Chapter Two

## Five Basic Principles

The Bible plainly sets forth some principles that we can use as we examine homeschooling philosophy. It seems like there are trillions of options that are available to us. As you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum, keep these principles in mind.

### 1. Homeschooling starts with “well-educated” parents.

Biblically, the definition of “well-educated” is a father and mother who thoroughly know the Bible, God’s Word. In other words, a knowledge of math, grammar, science, and history isn’t as necessary as the knowledge of Scripture. If you know your Bible, then you are extremely “well-educated.”

Deuteronomy 6:1-7 says,

**“These are the commands, decrees and laws YHVH your God directed me to teach you to observe** in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear YHVH your God as long as you live **by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you**, and so that you may enjoy long life. Hear, O Israel, and **be careful to obey** so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as YHVH, the God of your fathers, promised you.

Hear, O Israel: YHVH our God, YHVH is one. Love YHVH your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.** Impress them on your children.” (Emphasis mine)

Education is not just head knowledge, though. A truly well-educated person knows how to *apply* knowledge to everyday life and lives it out in all his or her decisions and actions. The same is true with God’s Word. It’s one thing to *know* God’s Word; it’s yet another to *act* on your knowledge.

Proverbs 14:26 says,

**“He who fears YHVH has a secure fortress,  
and for his children it will be a refuge.”**

Therefore, according to God, a successful homeschool is one in which the parents have a thorough, working knowledge of the Bible and a fear of God that results in obedience to His Word. First, be sure you read and study your Bible often, so that you are “well-educated” in His instructions and commands. Then, **as you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum, be very sure that the authors uphold the authority of Scripture and will help teach you first**, especially if you’re lacking in your own knowledge.

## **2. A homeschooling parent’s job is to teach.**

Scripture seems to make it very clear that education is led by the father and mother, not by the child. A child is not born with knowledge, wisdom, or understanding; rather, a child is born with the same selfish, sinful, and pleasure-seeking nature that follows you around most days. Your child, left to himself, will choose to please himself, will rarely think of others, will be lazy and avoid hard work, and will do only what looks right in his own eyes.

When Deuteronomy 6:7 says we are to “impress” God’s commands on our children, the idea is that we are to intensively poke, pierce, prod, and drill these commands into our children. God has presented us with the “curricula,” which are His Words and commands. The “method” He has chosen is for us *drill* it into our children.

Note also that the curriculum is set! We don’t get to pick the subjects. God is clear that we are to teach His commands.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 says,

**“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Messiah Yeshua. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

**As you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum and methods, simply toss out any of that “gentle” advice that seems to hint that**

**children just pick things up naturally, without any effort on your part or theirs.** Keep the methods that require you as a parent to do hard work, impressing and drilling and teaching. It might not be as fun, but it's biblical.

**Also, as you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum and methods, get rid of secular, humanistic textbooks and concentrate your efforts on teaching Scripture** so your children will be "thoroughly equipped."

### **3. A homeschooled child's job is to listen.**

Here the Scripture stands in firm opposition to the politically correct notion that parents should be the ones doing all the listening. Rather, the Bible *repeatedly* warns children to honor, obey, listen to instruction, hear, pay attention, and hearken. I don't have time to list all the verses, because there are so many. Here is one example. The book of Proverbs opens with this thought:

**"Listen, my son, to your father's instruction  
and do not forsake your mother's teaching.**

**They will be a garland to grace your head  
and a chain to adorn your neck."**<sup>2</sup>

Scripture is clear that one of the first jobs parents have is to teach their child to listen to them. Paying attention to authority isn't just a nice thought; it's vital to everything else in your child's life. If your child will not look at you when speak, pay attention to your words, and obediently do what you say, then you will certainly fail in your homeschooling.

Listening is a skill needed throughout life. We will always have others in authority over us. Teaching children to listen is *vital* for their future ability to keep a job, function in society as Scripture commands, be a loving spouse, and to be a parent!

**So as you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum and methods, it's important that you choose methods that will help your child learn good listening skills.** Choose curriculum that reinforces the importance of following directions, paying attention to you as the teacher, and obeying instructions from the very earliest age.

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<sup>2</sup> Proverbs 1:8-9

#### **4. Homeschooling requires a large time commitment.**

If you weren't groaning before, you probably are now! With seven children, I can certainly understand the frustrations involved in trying to have time for your spouse, maintain a home, be involved in ministry, maybe work a business, and even have time to play a little—all on top of getting school done each day. It can be agonizing.

Yet Scripture is absolutely clear where our priorities must be. Proverbs 29:15 (KJV) says,

**“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.”**

Can it get any clearer than that? “The rod and reproof” require a mother who is physically present in the room with her children. A child “left to himself” will bring her to shame—both now and in the future.

For most of us parents, our own heart inclination is to give our children over to someone or something else who has more time than we do, but the Bible is clear with whom they should be spending their time. It's also clear with whom we must be spending *our* time, even though we would almost always rather be doing something more fun or glamorous.

**So as you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum and methods, the Bible is clear that we need to choose ones which require our physical presence in the room with our children,** if we expect them to get any wisdom from their education and if we don't want to be ashamed of them someday.

#### **5. Homeschooling instruction should be pleasant.**

Aren't you glad God put this into His Word? After the cold, hard facts of the previous four points, homeschooling could be a real drudgery without this. However, God is the author of love, joy and peace. Even though His standards are high, His methods are hard work and His curriculum is rigorous, His schoolroom atmosphere is pleasant, fun, and inviting.

Proverbs 16:21 says,

**“The wise in heart are called discerning,  
and pleasant words promote instruction.”**

Proverbs 31:26 (KJV) also says,

**“She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”**

I have enjoyed recently having a room set aside for just school, but for many years we used the kitchen table, the living room, and even the back seat of the van as our school room. Maps, decorations, and windows with bright sunshine can certainly add to the pleasantness of our homeschooling days.

However, God says the one essential thing to a pleasant, joyful, instruction-promoting school environment is your tongue. Your words will make or break it. Do you want your children to love learning? Do you want them to be passionate discoverers, lifelong learners, and avid readers? Rather than investing your money and time into special equipment, expensive encyclopedias, and fancy computer software, God says to use “pleasant words.”

**So as you read homeschooling how-to books and choose curriculum and methods, look for those that will help you succeed as a parent by promoting your own godly character.** In fact, rather than reading all those books and searching through stacks of catalogs, maybe your time would be better spent with God Himself.

As Proverbs 4:23 says,

**“Above all else, guard your heart,  
for it is the wellspring of life.”**

# How May I Help You?

I first wrote this book in 2011, and since that time, YHVH directed our family to open our own curriculum company. Using the Bible as our primary textbook, we produce a family-centered homeschooling curriculum for preschool to high school, with support materials and Bible studies to encourage parents and promote strong homes.

We now have curriculum for Bible, history, Hebrew, music, phonics, grammar, preschool, electives—and even more!

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