

INTEGRATING THE GOSPEL INTO YOUR HOMESCHOOL

A MENTOR MOM © CLASS

by Beth Ashton

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3 Steps in Effectively Integrating the Gospel into your Home

1. Love

Speaking of her Young Woman's Leader, Sheri Dew said simply, "She loved me, so I let her lead me."

She continued, "If we really want to make a difference, it will happen as we mother those we have borne and those we are willing to bear with. If we will stay right with our youth—meaning, if we will *love* them—in most cases they will stay right with us—meaning, they will let us *lead* them." Sheri L. Dew, "Are We Not All Mothers?," Ensign, Nov 2001, 96

"Perhaps the reason we respond so universally to our mothers' love is because it typifies the love of our Savior." Elder Bradley D. Foster, "Mother Told Me," April 2010 General Conference

Action Plan: Pray that you may see your family members as Heavenly Father sees them. Listen to your children. Get to know them. Work *with* them. Talk while you work. Play with them. Read to them. Schedule one-on-one time with each member of the family. Create family activities based on *their* interests.

2. Learn

The Lord has said, "Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men." (D&C 11:21)

"Many missionaries struggle to know how to study effectively. Some rely heavily on others or on structured programs to tell them what and how to study. While learning from a good teacher is very important, **it is more important for you to have meaningful learning experiences on your own.** Getting good results from your study depends on having a strong desire to learn, studying with "real intent" (Moroni 10:4), "hunger[ing] and thirst[ing] after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6), and searching for answers to your investigators' {or your "little investigators"--your children} questions and concerns." Preach My Gospel Manual, pg. 17

"Lucifer would have us so busy—with family, friends, careers, and every soccer league in town—that there's no

time to live the gospel. No time to fast and pray, to immerse ourselves in the scriptures, to worship in the temple—all the things we need to do to "study" for our mortal test. In other words, he wants us to be a little more concerned with the world than with the gospel, a little more interested in life today than in life forever." Sheri Dew, This is a Test. It is Only a Test

"We no longer have the luxury of spending our energy on anything that does not lead us and our families to Christ." Sheri L. Dew, "We Are Women of God," *New Era*, Nov 2000, 12

Action Plan: Simplify life. Remove daily distractions. Schedule time to read, ponder, and pray. Set goals. Prioritize. Pray each morning over your goals for the day. Use teaching callings/ weekly Sunday School lessons, etc. to dive deep into study. Then, "*Do it.*"

3. Lead

D&C 121:41-44, D&C 84:85

"When crises come in our lives—and they will—the philosophies of men interlaced with a few scriptures and poems just won't do. Are we really nurturing our youth and our new members in a way that will sustain them when the stresses of life appear? Or are we giving them a kind of theological Twinkie—spiritually empty calories? President John Taylor once called such teaching "fried froth," the kind of thing you could eat all day and yet finish feeling totally unsatisfied." —Jeffrey R. Holland, "A Teacher Come from God," Ensign, May 1998, 25

"Our challenge as parents and teachers is not to create a spiritual core in their souls but rather to fan the flame of their spiritual core already aglow with the fire of their premortal faith." Elder Neil L. Anderson, "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus," April 2010 General Conference

"The youth of the Church, your students, are in great majority sound in thought and in spirit. **The problem primarily is to keep them sound, not to convert them.** The youth of the Church are hungry for things of the spirit; they are eager to learn the Gospel, and they want it straight, undiluted. They want to know about the fundamentals I have just set out—about our beliefs; they want to gain testimonies of their truth; **they are not now doubters but inquirers, seekers after**

truth. ... You do not have to sneak up behind this spiritually experienced youth and whisper religion in his ears; you can come right out, face to face, and talk with him. You do not need to disguise religious truths with a cloak of worldly things; you can bring these truths to him openly, in their natural guise. Youth may prove to be not more fearful of them than you are. There is no need for gradual approaches, for "bed-time" stories, for coddling, for patronizing, or for any of the other childish devices used in efforts to reach those spiritually inexperienced and all but spiritually dead." - PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR., "The CHARTED COURSE of the CHURCH in Education"

Elder David Bednar spoke in last month's General Conference about the importance of bearing testimony of gospel truths spontaneously with your children. He also said, "...The best family home evenings are not necessarily the product of preprepared, purchased, or downloaded packets of outlines and visual aids. What a glorious opportunity for family members to search the scriptures together and to be tutored by the Holy Ghost."

Example of Beth's Daily Devotional:

1. Prayer
2. Song (s)
3. Read and discuss scripture or Gospel Art Kit picture or Gospel Principles lesson, General Conference Addresses, etc. (If this is more in depth than the younger ones can stay focused on, I'll usually print off a coloring page (that pertains to the subject matter) for the younger children to color while we discuss the topic.)
4. Memorization practice (I usually start off by saying: "I really want to memorize this scripture! Will you guys help me memorize it?")
5. Children are offered the opportunity to recite one of the following (And yes, they *do always* want the opportunity to be the center of attention): Scripture, Article of Faith, or a quote from a General Authority.
6. Song Practice (I usually try to find out what songs they are learning at Primary so they will feel more confident to sing at church.)
7. (You could end with a prayer here—however; we usually just continue right into our other studies.)

"Parents must bring light and truth into their homes by one family prayer, one scripture study session, one family home evening, one book read aloud, one song, and one family meal at a time."

Elder L. Tom Perry, "Mothers Teaching Children in the Home," April 2010 General Conference

Action Plan: Talk about your daily experiences & what you're learning. Talk about how you've learned to identify the Spirit

and provide opportunities where they can feel the Spirit. Show your children where you go to find answers to life's questions. Use your mistakes as teaching opportunities. Depending on the ages and interests of your children, you may act out scripture stories, play games, or use flannel board stories as visual aids. Bring in Gospel principles into discussions of other books or other subjects. Provide service opportunities for your children. Share ideas with your children as to how to serve others (especially with in the home.) Search the scriptures together by topic. Make Holidays and traditions more meaningful by integrating the Gospel into them. Protect your children from spiritual "junk food"-- or influences that distract us from our mission.

Conference Talks

- Elder Robert D. Hales, "Our Duty to God: The Mission of Parents and Leaders to the Rising Generation," April 2010 General Conference
- Elder David A. Bednar, "Watching with All Perseverance," April 2010 General Conference
- Elder L. Tom Perry, "Mothers Teaching Children in the Home," April 2010 General Conference

Beth's Favorite Gospel Resources

Gospel Art Kit, Gospel Principles Manual, Preach My Gospel Manual, Jesus the Christ by James E. Talmage, www.friend.lds.org www.sugardoodle.net

For more ideas, pictures, and detailed information you can visit my website at: www.pursuing-happiness.com

Beth Ashton lives in Goochland, Virginia, and loves homeschooling her 3 children. Although homeschooling was never in her original plan for motherhood, she has found it instrumental in helping her become who she came here to be. Learning along with her three children has enriched, challenged, inspired, and intrigued her, and has fulfilled her life.