

*If I Only Had 24 Hours to Live...*  
by Vicki S. Norris

It's time for another school year to start and you are scurrying frantically to insure that you have absolutely everything you need for every student for every subject. Is that really the BEST curriculum for math? Is this grammar curriculum going to cover EVERYTHING? American history or world history or state history? Are those labs and experiments really necessary for science?

Whoa!! Slow down.....take a deep breath. Now.....let's prioritize.

Ask yourself:

- ◆ If I only had 24 hours to live, what is the ONE thing I would want to make sure I convey to my child(ren)?
- ◆ Miraculously, I've been granted another 24 hours. What is ONE MORE thing I want to convey to my child(ren)?
- ◆ Those doctors were off base and I now have a total of a week to live. What do I want to impart to my children in the time I have left?

I guarantee you that in that first 24 hours, academics wouldn't even cross your mind, and maybe not in the entire week. It changes your whole perspective, doesn't it? Hopefully, within that first 24 hours (after you know without a doubt that YOUR destination is secure) you would make sure your child has a personal relationship with Jesus. In the second 24 hours, I would trust that, if you haven't already, you would equip your child to have a meaningful daily fellowship with Jesus by grounding him in God's Word. As for the other five days you've been granted, it might look a little different for each person, but I imagine that academics still wouldn't rank very high on the list.

Is formal education important? Yes. But it doesn't demand our full attention and it certainly isn't worthy of the unrealistic expectations we place on ourselves and our children. Academics are necessary in our society, but they need to be filtered through our biblical worldview. First, make sure your relationship with Jesus is yielded and obedient. Second, make sure your relationship with your spouse is not only healthy but thriving. If it isn't, your children will know! Third, a child's relationship with his parents should be a shadowing of his relationship with God. Training them to be obedient to you will help them to be obedient to Him. Teach them to relate to others in a manner acceptable to Christ, to be pleasant, mannerly, and responsible. In other words, work on positive character traits or "put on" the fruit of the Spirit on a daily basis. Equip them to build a foundation that will stay with them for life and beyond.

Are there days where discipline seems to take preeminence over academics?? We've ALL had those days. Before you get frustrated that you aren't accomplishing everything on the "to do" list or the assignment sheet, ask yourself ... "If I only had 24 hours to live, what is the ONE thing I would want to make sure I convey to my child(ren)?" Deal with the discipline and

the character issues today! We have a responsibility to our children to hold them accountable just as we are held accountable before the Lord. Everything we do should point our children and others to Him as we reflect Him.

To whom were your children given? To the babysitter? To the grandparents? To the church? God gave children to the PARENTS! I believe we will give an account before Him one day in respect to their nurturing and biblical training. Don't get sidetracked by doing GOOD things - whether it be at church or elsewhere - and forget to do the BEST things. If your children are having character issues, maybe it's time to step down from all the outside obligations and focus on getting your children back on track. If you don't do it, who will?????

Don't let society whisper to you that you aren't worthy of recognition or that you aren't accomplishing great things because you are ONLY a wife and mother. I believe there is no higher calling for a woman in God's eyes. When you are doing what you were put on this earth to do, don't be ashamed of it.....embrace it!!!

Every morning, ask yourself..... "If I only have these next 24 hours, what do I want to convey to my child(ren)?"

We are not promised tomorrow.....