

THE CORNERSTONE CURRICULUM PROJECT

Giants or God in Your Backyard? Learning to Live by Faith

by David Quine

10 to 2 - Are these the new recommended hours for home schooling? No. Is this the score of a some soccer game? No. These numbers represent the ten spies who said not to trust God and the two (Joshua and Caleb) who said God was able. Ten men saw giants in the land while two men saw God in the land. Ten men saw only the visible world while two men saw the unseen world. Ten men were gripped by fear while two men were guided by faith.

Do you perceive obstacles to your home schooling? Do the obstacles before you seem like giants in the land or opportunities to trust God? I have noticed three giants looming in the hearts and minds of many home school parents today: difficulties, fears and inadequacies.

The Hill of Difficulties

We have found that home schooling is a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week, 365 day a year experience. When we first began home schooling, we thought that we would do it for about 3 or 4 years. Well, that was almost 15 years ago! The difficulties are many - for example, home schooling a second grader, and kindergartner while trying to care for two year old twins and a new born . There are times we'd like to call a substitute or just call it quits. The hill of difficulty is sometimes steep. But along the way God gives us moments of refreshment. Times like when our children express a deep understanding of God in their lives.

I am reminded of imagery of Christian climbing the Hill of Difficulty in *The Pilgrim's Progress*:

I looked then after Christian, to see him go up the hill, where I perceived he fell from running to going, and from going to clambering upon his hands and his knees, because of the steepness of the place. How about the midway to the top of the hill was a pleasant arbor, made by the Lord of the hill for the refreshing of weary travellers. Thither, therefore, Christian got, where also he sat down to rest him; then he pulled his roll out of his bosom, and read therein to his comfort; he also now began afresh to take a review of the coat or garment that was given him as he stood by the cross.

Christian, though wearied from his journey, found rest for his soul at the arbor prepared by God. There he read the Scripture and contemplated his righteousness in Christ. When the climb of home schooling seems too difficult and you become wearied by all the work, find your rest in the Lord. Though there may not appear to be an arbor of rest in the near future for your family, remember "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Exodus 33: 14)

Feelings of Fear

The culture is so evil. Will my children be adequately prepared for the future? Am I doing enough? Should we just find some quiet -out of the culture - place to live? If you ever have any of these thoughts you know how quickly they move in to grip your emotions. Of course, fear is the opposite of faith. I am reminded of little Much-Afraid in *Hinds Feet on High Places*. She was part of

the family of fearlings. Her whole thought life was in need of transformation. A transformation that only the Chief Shepherd could accomplish.

God has not called us to isolate from the culture. Rather, He has equipped us with His armor to go into the culture. As home schooling parents, we are partnering with God, in the discipleship of our children - to win, to build, and to send them into the culture as lights penetrating the darkness, as ambassadors reflecting the nature and character of God, and as letters of Christ to be read by all men.

“Remember always that there are two things which are more utterly incompatible even than oil and water, and these two are trust and worry. Would you call it trust if you should give something into the hands of a friend to attend to for you, and then should spend your nights and days in anxious thought and worry as to whether it would be rightly and successfully done? And can you call it trust, when you have given the saving and keeping of your soul into the hands of the Lord, if day after day, and night after night, you are spending hours of anxious thought and questionings about the matter? When a believer really trusts anything, he ceases to worry about the thing he has trusted. And when he worries, it is a plain proof that he does not trust....No wonder our Lord asked the pathetic question, “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” He will find plenty of work, a great deal of earnestness, and doubtless many consecrated hearts; but shall He find faith, the one thing He values more than all the rest? Every child of God, in his own case, will know how to answer this question. Should the answer, for any of you, be a sorrowful No, let me entreat you to let this be the last time for such an answer; and if you have ever known anything of the trustworthiness of our Lord, may you henceforth set to your seal that He is true, by the generous recklessness of your trust in Him!” (Taken from *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* by Hannah Whitall Smith)

Have you given your children into the hands of God or our you trusting in some man -made curriculum? Put your confidence in God. He is worthy of our trust. Remember, trust and worry don’t mix.

Feelings of Inadequacy

Have you ever asked the question, “Who is adequate for such a task of raising children?” Nine days out of ten Shirley and I wonder why we are doing what we are doing. Many days we feel totally inadequate. The task often seems too large. The responsibilities too great.

Would you be surprised if I said that is exactly were God wants you to be? This is the feeling that the apostle Paul had. Let me share with you his secret to success. He writes:

And such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life....Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day” II Cor. 3: 4 - 6, 4:16.

When we home school we must remember that our adequacy does not rest in our degrees, or our training, or our curriculum; but rather our sufficiency - our adequacy - rests upon God who has made us adequate for this very task! Whenever your emotions begin to influence your will to think about joining the ten spies who turned back, resolve to stick with the two men who put their confidence in God. When you detect giants in your backyard “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (II Cor. 10:5).