

# ***A Busy Woman's Survivor Manual***

## **A Busy Woman's Survival Manual**

by Carolyn Mahaney

Whew! After devotions, exercise, grocery store run, beds made, dishes done, house straightened, laundry underway, Chad homeschooled, soccer carpool completed, editing project for my husband finished—I can finally attempt to write a post

Life is busy!

And it's not just me. Whether you are a student, holding down a job, or caring for a family—the fall season unfailingly fills our lives with lots to do.

So what does it look like to glorify God in the midst of a busy season? My girls and I felt a need for fresh perspective, and so, we figured, maybe you do too. Drawing from thoughts we've posted previously, we want to consider three indispensable qualities for busy, even hectic times like these.

The first must-have to survive—and even thrive—during busy seasons: humility.

I still remember the wise and helpful counsel my husband CJ shared with me many years ago when I was having one of those “I just can't get it all done” breakdown crying sessions. When he finally got the chance to speak, he said: “Carolyn, only God completes His to-do list. We are not God. We are finite creatures with serious limitations. Therefore we need to humble ourselves by accepting our limitations and draw upon God's strength to simply do what we can.” CJ's advice not only helped me then, but continues to benefit me to this day.

Here are 3 simple ways we can be mindful of our limitations as we make our to-do lists these days:

1. Separate the-really-do-matter items from the really-don't-matter items—of course doing the really-do-matter items first.

2. Simplify the really-do-matter items where possible. (e.g. pizza for dinner or store-bought cookies for entertaining.)
3. Trust God for all the things on the list that don't get done.

Let's honor God by responding to our "endless" list of to-dos with humility—joyfully accepting our limitations and simply doing what we can.

*"When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom."*  
Proverbs 11:2

## Always in a Busy Season

by Kristin Chesemore

Yesterday Mom talked about the challenges of the busy fall season. As a mom with young kids, I feel like I'm *always* in a busy season—spring, summer, winter, or fall! However, I did start Andrew's homeschooling year a couple of weeks ago. And Liam recently began weekly tutoring for a slight learning disability.

These new responsibilities only add to the constant feeling of "being overwhelmed" and "having no time." And they only increase the temptation I already face to rationalize away my quiet times, to try to do it all in my own strength. That's why I need to cultivate our second indispensable quality: dependence upon God.

Even though I might not be able to have extended times each and every day, I must not neglect my relationship with the Lord simply because I have young children. Because the truth is, I need His strength and wisdom now more than I ever have! Whether it means getting up early or taking time over the boys' rest-time, I must make every effort to seek God's face and receive His grace.

Recently, I've begun "tracking" my times with the Lord again. I write down how much time I spend with the Lord each day, or a "o" for none at all. This is not a legalistic attempt to earn God's approval. Rather, it is to help remind me of the importance of seeking God and to help keep me from neglecting my relationship with Him.

On this topic, I want to encourage you to read an article by Donald Whitney, author of *Simplify Your Spiritual Life*. He both empathizes with the unique challenges a young mom faces, and yet encourages us not to neglect our pursuit of the spiritual disciplines. But even if you don't have

young children, this is a timely article for all of us who are crazy busy: “Do What You Can.” And do it all in the shadow of the cross.

## Unspeakable Peace

by Kristin Chesemore

*“In all your ways acknowledge him.”* Proverbs 3:6

It’s a familiar verse. One we are often quick to quote and slow to apply. And yet, if obeyed, it can produce peace in your soul and mine during busy seasons. Charles Bridges’ provides fresh insight into this little verse. Consider his comments carefully:

“Take one step at a time, every step under Divine warrant and direction. Ever plan for yourself in simple dependence on God. It is nothing less than self-idolatry to conceive that we can carry on even the ordinary matters of the day without his counsel. He loves to be consulted...Consider no circumstances too clear to need his direction. In all thy ways, small as well as great; in all thy concerns, personal or relative, temporal or eternal, let him be supreme. Who of us has not found the unspeakable ‘peace’ of bringing to God matters too minute or individual to be entrusted to the most confidential ear?”

Proverbs 3:6 is our go-to verse when we’re faced with a big decision. We are often quick to acknowledge the Lord and seek His guidance in extraordinary situations. However, we assume we can “carry on...the ordinary matters of the day without his counsel.” God calls this self-idolatry and pride.

How often I live as if I don’t need God in order to clean my bathroom, or discipline the boys, or get dinner on the table—as if I am sufficient in and of my self to handle most things! My lack of dependence upon God is pronounced in these “ordinary matters.”

And yet, as Mr. Bridges points out, “God loves to be consulted...no circumstance [is] too clear to need his direction!” He wants us to bring to him all our little decisions, our minor frustrations, our small dilemmas. He doesn’t just tolerate our questions—God LOVES to be consulted! Hasn’t he commanded us to acknowledge Him in *all* our ways?

A season of busyness may tempt you to anxiety, but as Christians, we are truly meant to experience peace in our souls each and every day. This

precious, “unspeakable peace,” comes when we bring to God all of the ordinary matters of our day.

So what were you going to do next? Before you get up from your computer, pause, read this verse and quote again, and acknowledge Him. Unspeakable peace can be yours for the rest of the day.

## Cheerfully Busy

by Janelle Bradshaw

I sure can relate to Mom and Kristin with this busyness thing. There’s been lots of meetings, a few time-consuming photography jobs, the cooking and cleaning, the dentist (cavities are the pits), laundry and for the icing on the cake, Caly has been up in the middle of the night teething. I peeked at my calendar through half closed eyes this morning only to see that the next two weeks seem to have even more.

Now, I would like to say that I usually run around completing my tasks with a happy smile set on my face and mirrored in my heart. Not always. If you saw me, you may see a smile, but my heart often looks a little bit different. Complaining and grumbling sometimes find a home. I move from one task and event to the next, caught up in how I feel and what I would rather be doing instead.

Today I read something from one of our favorite authors, Mr. Charles Spurgeon. He never knew me, but seemed to pen these words just for me...

“Cheerfulness is the support of our strength; in the joy of the Lord are we strong. It acts as the remover of difficulties. It is to our service what oil is to the wheels of a railway carriage. Without oil the axle soon grows hot, and accidents occur; and if there be not a holy cheerfulness to oil our wheels, our spirits will be clogged with weariness...Reader, let us put this question—do you serve the Lord with gladness? Let us show to the people of the world, who think our religion to be slavery, that it is to us a delight and a joy! Let our gladness proclaim that we serve a good Master.”

My mission? To apply these wise words. I need to oil my wheels of service with an extra dose of “holy cheerfulness” (along with humility and dependence) so that a watching world will see my relationship with the Lord as a delight and not slavery. I want those that encounter me over these next few weeks to see that I serve a “good Master.”\*

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