

Starting the new year right!

-by Janet Billson, former Area 2 representative

I just love a brand new year, don't you? It's a fresh start, a chance to rethink priorities and write down goals. During the first week of January, I did just that. I sat down at the computer, and wrote out my goals for 2002. Here are some of them, in no particular order.

1. Read my Bible 30 minutes per day minimum.
2. Read to the little kids every day. (It is so easy, with 9 children still at home, to put off just sitting and cuddling and reading together. But the sparkle in their eyes is well worth the effort!)
3. Exercise 30 minutes per day, except Sundays. (With too many extra pounds on me to admit publicly, THIS is truly a priority!)
4. Write, write, write.
5. Finish "Guard your heart." (Christian Counselling Course)
6. Develop a course teaching women how to be godly wives and mothers. (Titus 2)
7. Finish studying "The Mute Christian under the Hand of God."
8. Only one game per day of Spider Solitaire. (Ever notice how easy it is to waste time? I thank the Lord that He is so patient with me as I learn to redeem the time.)
9. Only one game per day of Tetris. (at the most...I don't play this every day!)
10. Kitchen clean before bed. (I hate to make breakfast in an untidy kitchen, and I find myself cleaning up instead of meeting with God first, if the kitchen is not in order.)
11. Bedroom cleaned daily, deep clean Saturdays. (I require the children to make their beds and clean their rooms each morning before breakfast...if a man will not work, neither will he eat!)

But I don't have the same standards for myself. Part of this comes from being married to a night owl, who tends to sleep in later than me. (He often works until 1:00 or 2:00 am, so sleeps until 9:00 or 10:00 am. I am usually up by 6:00 or 7:00, so I am in the middle of my morning routine when he gets started on his day!) Part of it comes from just forgetting about the bedroom once I leave it, then walking into it late at night and being too exhausted to tackle it. But I really want to set a better example for my children, and make a haven for my husband and myself. So, no clothes strewn about, and the bed must be made even if it means purposing to go back into the bedroom after my hubby is up and about.

12. Clean one closet or box or special needs area per week.
13. Plan school work on Saturdays, do all copying, etc., once per week.
14. Love my husband, and love my children.

That is just a partial list. I printed it out and I have it sitting on my desk, in plain sight, so I can be reminded from time to time that there are things I want to accomplish beyond the daily repetitive tasks. Moms, especially home schooling moms, tend to get caught up in the teaching, cleaning, meal preparation, correcting of schoolwork, planning of lessons, and so on. That takes up so much of their time. So they must learn to schedule in time for their husbands, and time for their children. That may sound odd, considering they are with the children all day. But do they take the time to just have fun with the precious little ones God entrusted to their care?

When was the last time you sat on the floor with your two year old and drove a toy car back and forth between you? Have you played with Lego lately? Have you put a puzzle together? Have you taken the time to have a tea party, complete with good china and dress up clothes? Have you simply read a great book to them, for the sheer joy of reading beautiful literature or poetry?

And what about your husband? Have you gone on a date with him lately? Have you prepared his favourite meal? Did you remember to do that special task he asked of you, or did you put it off because you were too busy teaching?

Remember your priorities, home schooling mom.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. - Matt. 22:37

Your first priority is to love your God.

“The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;
That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,
To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not blasphemed.” (Titus 2:3-5)

The second is to love your husband and your children.

You can better satisfy these priorities by sitting down, setting goals, and reviewing them regularly.

God bless you as you seek to serve Him this year.

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