

Jennifer's Life Goals

-2010 Revision-

With full recognition of God's sovereignty over the affairs of men, I determine to give attention to the following areas of my life and of the lives of my family, praying that if it pleases Him, we might accomplish some or all of these goals through His strength and by His grace. Amen.

I. Spiritual

A. Personal

1. Bible study
 - a. Read through entire Bible on odd years
 - b. Read through New Testament in-depth on even years
 - c. Read at computer for faster cross-referencing
 - d. Don't eat until day's reading is complete
 - e. Read through Psalms/Proverbs with children at breakfast
2. Prayer time
 - a. Pray at night with Doug before bed – don't just amen his prayer
 - b. Keep a list of current prayer requests in cabinet
 - c. Use a prayer reminder bookmark inside current reading materials
 - d. Pray individually with older children before beginning lessons
 - e. Pray over little ones when tucking them in at night

B. Family

1. Memorize Scripture
 - a. Review at lunch time
 - (1) Selected verses for younger children
 - (2) Selected chapters for older kids
 - b. Post passages to be memorized in convenient locations for practice
 - (1) Copies of memorized passages in school notebooks
 - (2) Longer passages on backs of bathroom doors
 - (3) Keep copies of both on note cards in van
2. More joyful family devotions
 - a. Begin immediately after dinner
 - b. Start by singing hymns
 - c. Require the children to sit still and be attentive
 - d. Close in prayer
3. Study Christian doctrine
 - a. Review children's catechism during lesson time
 - b. Memorize books of the Bible, disciples, ten commandments, etc.
 - c. Assign great Christian books to older kids to read and discuss
4. Cultivate prayerful spirits
 - a. Pray at mealtime
 - (1) From the heart (not rote memorization)
 - (2) Hold hands during prayer
 - (3) Allow children to take turns praying
 - (4) No eating until God's blessing has been asked
 - b. Pray during difficult times
 - (1) Pray with disobedient child during time of discipline

- (2) Pray with sick child for grace during illness (no whining) and for a speedy recovery
 - (3) Pray with frightened child after nightmare
 - (4) Ask children to pray for me when I am stressed, impatient, worried, etc.
 - (5) Pray with children before starting off on a long trip, etc.
 - (6) Pray with child struggling with schoolwork or sibling relations
5. Work on the development of godly character qualities (pray that God develops these things in my own life, as well as in the lives of my children; model this for them). Of course, foremost in our prayer is that God draw each of our children unto Himself and that they may all come to faith at an early age. Beyond that, we also hope they will exhibit the following traits:
- a. Wisdom – lovingly correct foolish behavior or decisions, help child think through wise alternatives, as “What would Jesus do?” or “Are you treating others as you want to be treated?”
 - b. Obedience – clearly explain expectations and consistently require immediate, cheerful, complete obedience
 - c. Thoughtfulness – sensitive and kind to others, no teasing, no ugly remarks
 - d. Unselfishness – willing to share, older giving preference to younger, no snatching
 - e. Honesty – do not tolerate lying, discourage deception, play games and sports by the rules with no cheating
 - f. Thirst for knowledge – model this, convey excitement, capitalize on children’s interests, studying such subjects in depth whenever possible
 - g. Courtesy
 - (1) In speech – do not interrupt, wait patiently for opportunity to talk, use well-modulated tone of voice, say “yes, ma’am,” “no, sir,” “please,” “thank you,” “you’re welcome,” “excuse me”
 - (2) At table – help set/clear the table, wait to eat until blessing has been asked, use napkin, sit square in seat until dinner is over, ask to be excused before leaving table, keep cup at top of plate, keep mouth closed when chewing, do not talk with food in mouth, no banging on table with plates or utensils (or hands), no playing with food, take turns talking during meal, ask for food to be passed to you, serve others first, take small portions, try not to be wasteful
 - (3) In actions – do not crowd to be first in line, hold doors for others, be considerate
 - h. Frugality – discourage wastefulness, model conservation and thrift, choose activities which do not cost money (eg. feeding ducks at the park instead of playing video games at Putt-Putt) and which often provide more wholesome family time to boot, be careful also to conserve water and electricity by shutting off faucets and lights when not in use, closing doors to refrigerator and outdoors promptly

- i. Articulation – speak in clear voice, give thought to what is said, do not be argumentative, encourage retelling events and recreating stories, provide plenty of opportunities for children to write (letters, book reports, e-mails, etc.)
- j. Diligence – encourage children to be hard-working, praise them for this, give them chores to do: make bed, pick up toys, hang up clothes, feed animals, set/clear table, dust, vacuum, clean bathrooms, sort laundry, fold clean clothes, wash windows, empty trash
- k. Self-discipline – provide charts for older children so that they can monitor their own progress
- l. Patience – don't give in to demands, teach children to wait quietly and cheerfully
- m. Common sense – teach practical skills, such as cooking, yardwork, sewing, car care, driving, housekeeping, money management (open savings accounts for kids), typing, computer skills; discuss short-sighted behavior on part of children or others and reason through risks/ alternatives
- n. Orderliness – put away anything you get out, pick up after self, keep everything in its place, designate well-defined places for everything, keep drawers and closets well-organized, use room inspection charts to evaluate progress toward that goal, charge 25-cents an item for things the children leave out
- o. Cheerfulness – do not tolerate whining, complaining or rebellious attitudes, “choose joy”, model joy, a whining child automatically does not get what he's asking for
- p. Peacefulness – do not tolerate bickering or fighting
- q. Contentment – focus on God's blessings, discourage attitude that we must always be “going somewhere” or doing something instead of just spending quality time together in a peaceful, relaxed home, reflect more on what you have than on what you lack
- r. Confidence – praise strengths, minimize weaknesses, encourage child to try new things, give each a broad base of experiences
- s. Humility – do not tolerate arrogant attitudes or prideful remarks, memorize Scripture verses such as, “Pride goeth before destruction....”, be mindful that all we have and all we are comes from God, teach children how to respond to praise and how to accept compliments graciously
- t. Quietude – speak softly, ask child to restate if something is spoken too loudly, practice remaining quiet while parent is on phone, learn to be especially quiet in public (restaurants, stores, doctors' offices, library, etc.)
- u. Musicality – encourage singing, teach children words to great hymns, give piano lessons, develop appreciation for fine music by listening to it regularly in the home or on the road
- v. Creativity – encourage art and craft projects in a variety of medium, provide lots of supplies and any instruction needed
- w. Tender-heartedness – encourage children to look beyond the actions of others, exercise sympathy, try to understand actions

without excusing sin, exercise protectiveness toward those younger or more vulnerable

- y. Faithfulness – be dependable, keep promises
- z. Integrity – encourage children to do the right thing, on principle

C. Church

1. Attend Sunday morning worship services
2. Send weekly Family Times updates
3. Host elders' meetings/ church fellowships as able
4. Help clean weekly/ lock-up bimonthly
5. Participate in mercy ministry/ take meals to sick or convalescing
6. Work with children's choir??

II. Educational

A. Individual

1. Read on a consistent basis
 - a. Daily before bed
 - b. Aloud in afternoons
 - c. Finish a book per week
 - d. On a wide range of topics
 - (1) Bible
 - (2) Christian living/ Marriage and family
 - (3) History/ Biographies
 - (4) Fiction/ Humor
 - (5) Economics
 - (6) Self-Help/ How-to
 - (7) Homeschooling
 - (8) Research topics
 - e. Stash reading materials in convenient locations
 - (1) By easy chair
 - (2) On bedside table
 - (3) In bathroom cabinets
 - (4) In car
 - (5) Magazines in drawer beside bathtub
2. Write on a consistent basis
 - a. Correspondence
 - (1) Answer e-mails once a day
 - (2) Answer snail mail once a week
 - (3) Write Doug's parents monthly
 - (4) Send birthday cards to family birthdays
 - (5) Send Christmas updates day before Thanksgiving
 - (6) Send congratulations/ sympathy when appropriate
 - b. Book manuscripts
 - (1) Publish my first book this winter
 - (2) Edit Doug's manuscript this spring
 - (3) Begin writing next book this summer
 - c. Website updates
 - (1) Send email newsletter quarterly
 - (2) Expand files on site:

- (a) Tips: saving money, coupon-clipping, setting goals, home schooling
 - (b) Organization: scrapbooks, coupons, closets and drawers, cars, media, games
 - (c) Crafts: tin can stilts, Christmas ornaments, kids calendar, T-shirts (transfers and craft ideas – like flags for fourth, turkey handprints for Thanksgiving)
 - (d) Games: other forms of tag, chess with dice
 - (e) About us: update photos and bios – allow kids’ input
 - (f) Photos: add “watch me grow” for each child? Papa’s memorial slide show
 - (g) Music: add carols, David’s piano, Mom’s classical pieces, more hymns, lullabies?
 - (h) Books: update what we’re reading quarterly
 - (i) Mailbox: answer mail... print response to CLEP prep question, etc.
- (3) Submit items for publication in periodicals (*Above Rubies*, etc.) and entries to *Reader’s Digest* “Life in these United State”, etc. as time permits
- (4) Send letters to editor whenever worked up enough to write them
3. Develop practical skills
- a. Cooking
 - (1) Eat majority of meals at home – dine out no more than once a week
 - (2) Work toward cooking 30 meal plan
 - (3) Try new recipe once a month
 - (4) Plan menus by week or month, before doing grocery shopping
 - (5) Shop Sam’s at least once a month
 - b. Housekeeping
 - (1) Stay on top of chores
 - (a) Daily – clean kitchen, load dishes, empty dishwasher, gather trash, do laundry, water porch ferns
 - (b) Weekly – dust, vacuum, mop, scrub bathrooms, deep clean kitchen, drop off/pick up dry cleaning, set out trash (2X), water house plants, mow lawn, blow porches
 - (b) Monthly – do mending, deep clean garage, clean ovens, dust picture frames, change AC filters
 - (c) Quarterly – exterminate, organize closets/drawers, jiffy lube cars, clean grill
 - (2) Delegate appropriate chores to kids – Incorporate their help; teach them to see chores, not as drudgery, but as a way to serve and be a blessing to others
 - (a) Children rotate chores on yearly basis, changing in December
 - (b) Older children train younger on their individual chores

- (c) Some chores are mandatory (daily kitchen chores, folding own laundry, keeping room clean) and some are paid (weekly deep cleaning for older, capable children)
 - (3) Use proper tools for the job – order tools and cleaners from commercial supplier
 - 4. Develop talents and gifts
 - a. Music
 - (1) Sing solos when given opportunity
 - (a) Christina's recitals
 - (b) Church services
 - (2) Sing daily around the house, keep hymnal in kitchen
 - (3) Vocalize more extensively monthly
 - (4) Practice piano monthly – sight read
 - b. Art & Crafts
 - (1) Complete at least one craft project a month
 - (2) Needlepoint in car
 - (3) Learn to use Prismacolor pencils
 - (a) Children's book illustrations
 - (b) Wall hangings
 - (c) Cover pages to children's scrapbooks
 - (4) Keep kids' scrapbooks updated
- B. Family
 - 1. Home school
 - a. Daily – math, reading, spelling, handwriting, history, piano practice, scripture review, exercise
 - b. Weekly – art projects, science experiment, piano lessons, math and spelling games, thinking skills, creative writing, pleasure reading
 - 2. Take regular field trips (at least once a month)
 - a. Visit park or playground (Brookshires, Faulkner)
 - b. Visit library (Green Acres, Tyler Public)
 - c. Visit museum (Science Discovery Place, art museum, Brookshires)
 - d. Visit Caldwell zoo
 - e. Join in on TACHE field trips
 - 3. Read as a family
 - a. As much as possible, whenever children ask to be read to, oblige
 - b. Read chapter book aloud with Mom daily at lunchtime
 - c. Read chapter book as family after Bible time with Dad before bed
- III. Physical
 - A. Individual
 - 1. Lose weight
 - a. Restrict sugar
 - b. Drink 8 glasses of water daily
 - c. No between meal or bedtime snacks unless pregnant
 - 2. Exercise regularly
 - a. Bicycle daily before baby's birth, elliptical after
 - b. Situps daily, plus leg lifts and side bends
 - c. Walk twice weekly before baby's birth, jog afterwards

3. Eat better
 - a. More fruits and vegetables – three each daily
 - b. Less fried food – max. two per week
 - c. Whole grain breads – but in moderation
 - d. Take daily vitamin supplement
 4. Exercise good hygiene
 - a. Moisturize face and hands after washing
 - b. Wash hair twice weekly – condition or rinse in vinegar
 - c. Brush teeth after breakfast and before bed
 - d. Comb tangles out of hair first thing every morning
 - e. Trim nails weekly
 - f. Trim bangs monthly
 - g. Trim split ends quarterly
 - h. Facial weekly
 - i. Whiten teeth weekly
 - j. Pedicure monthly
- B. Family
1. Encourage Doug and kids to eat more healthful foods (no nagging), by eliminating stash of junk food in the pantry and by eating most meals at home
 2. Ensure plenty of sleep for kids
 - a. Bedtime by 8 pm for little ones
 - b. Stagger wake up times beginning at 6 am (everyone up by 8:30 for breakfast)
 - c. Naps for little ones and quiet reading time for older ones from 1-3 pm daily
 4. Ensure proper exercise (when children are well and weather permits)
 - a. Outdoor play or bike daily
 - b. Family tag or bike ride weekly
 5. Exercise good hygiene
 - a. Brush little ones' teeth daily
 - b. Wash little ones' hair weekly (Sat. night)
 - c. Clip children's nails once a week (Saturday)
 - d. Bathe babies at least every other night
 - e. Make sure girls comb tangles from their hair each morning and pin it out of their eyes
 - f. Cut boys' hair once a month
 - g. Make sure kids wash hands after toileting and before meals