



Instilling God's Word in Your Kids

An Interview with Tristie Fisher
by Ashley Ortega

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Ashley Ortega & Tristie Fisher, *Instilling God's Word in Your Kids*

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Ashley: Hello. I'm so glad you joined us today for our Home School Super Heroes Telesummit. My name is Ashley Ortega, and I'm so excited to have Tristie Fisher join us today.

Tristie is a graduate of Oklahoma State University with a degree in broadcast journalism, but God had different plans. She joined the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ in 1992 and was assigned to work with college girls at Texas A&M. For 5 years, she taught Bible studies, counseled college women, encouraged women to grow in their relationship with God.

Since 1996, she has been married to Dr. Brian Fisher, the senior pastor at Grace Bible Church. Tristie spends her time raising two wonderful children and speaking and teaching to various groups.

I am super excited, because my parents knew Brian Fisher and Tristie for years before I was even born, and we've gone to Grace Bible Church. So I'm really excited to interview her and listen to her words of wisdom.

Thanks for joining us today Tristie.

Tristie: You are more than welcome. It's my pleasure. And what most people may not know is that Ashley taught my son VBS last week, which I am thankful for. It's so cool to see that circle of spiritual growth. Knowing Ashley as a child, and then she turns around and teaches my son. So it's a blessing to me too.

Ashley: Good. I had a lot of fun with them. He kept us entertained the whole time. Well just to get started, could you tell our listeners a little bit about you and your family?

Tristie: Sure. My husband is, it's fun to hear you say Dr. Brian Fisher, because he just became a doctor in May. The way we say it is he's a doctor of the Bible. But it's funny, as my son told his second grade class last year, he's a doctor who can't help anybody.

So we said, no no no. Doctor of the Bible. It's a different deal. We're still getting used to that. We have been married almost 15 years. We are unusual folks, I think, because we love being married, we like each other, we love to laugh. We act like children. And we keep things fresh. And there's a kindness factor in every good marriage. We love being together and married.

We have two kids. My son is 8 ½, so there's testosterone flowing through the house. And then my daughter is 5 ½, and so I have sparkle and G. I. Joe. Brian and I prayed for children for years. Our basic premise was

once we have children, if God blesses us with children, we want to devote especially these early years to teaching them, equipping them, and instilling in them a love for God and his word and the abilities, in a sense, to share the gospel and to self-feed. That is, not be dependent completely on a pastor or a spiritual leader, but they themselves could feed themselves spiritually by reading the word and understanding appropriate behavior with forgiveness issues and things like that.

God has been so gracious to answer our prayers and to build us a family, and we love it.

Ashley: I have to say when I had your son in VBS, it was neat, because he was able to add a lot to the conversation. He did understand things and know not just the Bible answer, which every child knows from the top, but to actually explain it to me and talk with me about it.

Tristie: He's like a mini-theologian.

Ashley: Sort of building off of that, I know that's an area you're a hero to our listeners in, just equipping your children with God's word and God's principles. What are some practical tips and tricks you could share with our listeners on how to raise our kids up.

Tristie: I'd love to share it, because I had to learn it myself. Here's one learner to another.

One thing that was very interesting when I was on the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ for those 5 years is I would meet a lot of college students whose parents had appropriately and faithfully taken them to church, brought them up with Christian principles. These students would go to college, Texas A&M, where I'm at, and they either could not transfer some of their spiritual wisdom and knowledge. They couldn't feed themselves spiritually. A lot of forbidden behavior became glamorized.

I saw a lot of college kids walk away from God. They got freedom for the first time and walk away from the Lord. I watched this very carefully for about 5 years, and I thought what is the biggest goal here, and how do you do it? So I think this is my own personal theory so far, with an 8 year old and a 5 year old, it's working. We'll see at 18 and 15 if it worked. I'm convinced that the number one thing as you and I just spoke about is that if you're a Christian mom or dad with a Christian life, live a Christian life.

If you want your kids to emulate you, then live a life with integrity. Because they watch everything. I ask myself constantly. Brian asks himself constantly, do I forgive quickly? Do I read the Bible. Am I kind

to my husband? Do I ask their forgiveness when I hurt their feelings? Do they hear me gossiping on the phone with a friend? Do they see me choose not to buy something unless it's a need?

I really have a conviction about wanting to build these issues of forgiveness, kindness. I want them to see a good marriage, so I have to emulate one. I don't want them to be materialists, so I have to be a non-materialist, as best as I can.

But I think point one no question in my mind is live a Christian life. You cannot expect children to understand anything in a faith-based home if you yourself are not emulating it. That's just how it works. A couple different things too, one thing I told my children almost since they were talking age, I am not Jesus. I am Tristie. And I'm a human, and I sin, and I needed a savior. I think it's finally sinking after all these years. One thing I noticed with those college students. One of the reasons they would be so disillusioned when they got to college, was mommy and daddy were this, and Jesus was this. It threw them into a tailspin. They couldn't decide who was who and who's telling me the truth, and what do I personally believe?

For me, at a very young age, probably 3 or 4, I would begin to treat the children as if they were adults in a Christian relationship. I hurt your feelings. Will you forgive mommy? I did promise that we would do that. Let's go do that right now. But treating them with a kind and respectful heart, but most importantly living a Christian life. They see it, they get it, they emulate it. And then it comes back out of their mouth, like my daughter says, mommy, it's time to go to bed, and you haven't done your Bible study.

I would say number one, live a Christian life. That's the absolute thing. At night, we incorporate the reading of the Bible into our night time devotional time. We are structure people, so we choose between 1 and 3 short Bible stories, cause everybody's tired. We lightly discuss them, if that makes sense. But in such a consistent habit for 8 years, they begin to ask deeper questions. That's the first thing we do at night.

And then we pray. And the goal for us was to teach them the concept of prayer. Not develop religious regulations and you better be praying, the legalistic kind of a deal. We pray for specific issues, maybe a country that's closed to the gospel, an individual with cancer, folks struggling, maybe ourselves if we're going to do something the next day, and then praying for friends and blessing our family. And then we turn to them, and it's been so hilarious because the first question we used to ask them when they were really young was is there something you want to ask God

for. Well, you can imagine the answers you get there. I'd like a Barbie townhouse and a Tommy the Train set. \$900. Thank you Jesus, amen.

It sounds hilarious to us, and we as Christians go, no, not just that. But it's a fantastic way to introduce your child to conversational prayer. Talking to God. And then our favorite follow up question, once they understood they could talk to God on their own, and he listened to them just like he listened to us, then our favorite question became, is there something you want to thank God for. And it completely revolutionized their prayer life. I was 22 before I had a prayer life, and I'm watching my 5 year old son pray for China, my daughter pray for Africa.

It's been marvelous to see those two specific principles, living a Christian life yourself, and incorporating the reading of the word and prayer, and see it change your lives. Those would be my first two tips, Miss Ashley.

Ashley: That's really cool. I like the idea of incorporating prayer as a family activity. Part of it is individual, but then also coming together and praying together as a family. That's cool to see.

Tristie: You have a rich prayer life, that's why. I watched your parents do it with you guys. Prayer is simply, as Campus Crusade used to say, talking with God. And I remember the shocked look on my son's face the first time I told him that God listens to him as much as he listens to me. And he was stunned. And then he said, mommy, do you ever sin? And I was like, are we kidding? Let me see, 1-5 today.

Ashley: That's neat. How do you, we talked about prayer and living a Christian life, but how do you develop godly character from the start? I understand you have to emulate it, but are there certain things we can do to help develop that in our kids?

Tristie: Absolutely. I think part of it too is what kind of "Christian kids" do you want to develop? One of my favorite things about walking with the Lord is how he speaks to our hearts and how he's quick to convict and he's also quick to create new ideas.

So Brian and I, we want world Christians, we want our children to grow up as world Christians, with a concern for the world, concern for lost individuals, countries that are closed and cannot have access to the gospel. One of the primary gifts I think God has given Brian and I is recruiting students across the seas with the gospel. When you talk about developing godly character from the start, part of that for me is not just studying the word and prayer and obviously living a Christian example, but also opening their minds to the needs of the world and helping them understand the world is not a Christian world.

You need to understand not only how to share your faith and who Jesus is, but ask God to give them a heart of compassion. You've seen what I just wrote to you, but my third point was just inviting missionaries in your home. If you want your children to see Christianity not just as a lifestyle, but as the most important thing, and that we're all living for the same thing, and that's eternity. If you want them to see a life style that Jesus died for every person, the Muslim in Saudi Arabia, the Asian in China or Tibet, the girl in France, the college student in Brazil, then invite missionaries into your home. I feel super strong about this. It's amazing. If you really believe that Jesus died for every person, then you're going to build a strategy around that.

Our favorite people to surround them with are people who have sacrificed comfort, you know what I mean, for the sake of the gospel. I hear from two of our best friends that pioneered a mission in Greece. They were in East Asia for 3 years living in a 900 square foot apartment with 3 kids. Far below the money making typical budget in America, but they believe that God called them to East Asia to share the gospel, because there's one Christian worker for 1.2 million people.

My kids have heard that from the day they were born. We invite Asian friends over. We had lunch on Sunday with two friends of mine that I don't know spiritually yet. I need to ask more questions, but I shared my faith with them twice, and the kids knew that. When missionaries come into town, you know how it is at Grace Bible Church. Everybody gets so excited. We have our friends stay with us, and we ask them to tell stories. It is astounding.

My kids are instantaneously responsive. First of all, they cannot believe that not everybody has Bibles. They're like what? And then when they hear how special and precious the word of God is, and it's worth giving your life for and not being comfortable, they're like, this isn't a mommy and daddy deal any more. It's Jesus as the world's ultimate king, and it's worth giving my life to.

That's one of our key strategies. We invite missionaries into our home, and we pray for them a ton. That is one of the biggest things, to be perfectly frank, when I see my kids misbehaving quite a bit, I do a double take on myself, and on my heart, and I say, haven't been praying enough for them. Not just those prayers at 4:30, Lord Jesus, please let Brian come home, because I'm about to go crazy. But those prayers that my daughter will be a woman of purity, that my son will be a man of integrity, that he will be a man of peace, she be a woman of joy.

It's very fun that they both have names that are biblical names. So we teach them what that means and that God picked them to be a source for himself. So we pray for them through spiritual worker issues, for self-control issues, Galatians 5 kind of stuff. And I'm convinced that you fight for kids in prayer faithfully and protect civilly. What really put this in for me one day years ago when I met an older person, and I said, I was praying for you this week, and this sweet elderly gentleman started to cry, and he said, no one in my life has ever prayed for me. And I said, my goodness, my kids are 8 and 5, and they have prayed since the age of 18 months to pray for people.

What an honor, what a privilege to build these children into the next generation that will impact not only our country but the world for Christ.

Ashley: I really like the idea of seeing how special and precious God is in a worldly sense. I think we can do that in prayer for children, and as you were saying with missionaries in our home. But going back to what you were saying about college kids moving away and falling off the rails, I think that's one of the biggest things. And it's hard, because I grew up in an excellent Christian home with amazing Christian parents, and I still, even when I hit that end of high school and beginning of college, I had to make it my faith. I think being able to see that as such an early age is neat, to develop your children in that way, so they don't see it as something that mom and dad do every Sunday or through the week we have devotions, but it's something that becomes theirs at an early age.

Tristie: I think it goes from family to individual. When I have sat my son down and said, God himself has called you to use you for his kingdom, he's like huh? Or when I say to my daughter, God has called you. You are a daughter of the King. Mommy is too, but you are a daughter of the King and there's a purpose for you.

As you said Ashley, that struggle. It's a valid and actually, wonderful struggle. Because anything that worth having, worth giving your life to is a challenge, and you have to struggle to get it. I remember Brian saying very clearly. You know my husband. He was raised in what I call the Fisher dynasty Christian family. All the Fishers are believers. And in about 10th or 11th grade, he had a faith crisis and was like, is this mine or mom and dads? He read Josh McDowell's *Resurrection Factor*.

Nowadays, we have Lee Strobel's *Case for Christ*. My basic plan is as my kids get older and then did ask this from my son for the first time, how do we know this stuff is true? We inundate them with books like *Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel, anything by Josh McDowell, beginning to teach them, this is not just an emotional, feelings oriented faith. It's an

intellectual, designer, created world. And this is why, here is the proof for these things. And I think that's the time between.

I used to think it was older. Now I think it's between 8 and 12 that you begin to explain to them, this is the issue, this is your thing. And honestly, Ashley as a last note on that part, one thing God really put in my mind is to just relax. He is faithful. I can entrust my children to him. Proverbs tells us that the child will return. I want my kids to have their own faith.

And part of that will include a little bit of pain for old mom and dad as they test it out. I want to pray ahead of time, so when that time comes, I'm not shocked. I'm not surprised. I can treat their questions as common, as intellectual with respect, I can understand them perhaps. Because I was 19 when I started walking with God. I think those might be some helpful hints. I meet a lot of panicky parents when their kids go to college. I think the panic can drive them to their knees, and then it's a good thing. And if their panic can teach them that their kids are out of their control, truly, they're going to grow in their trust factor with the Lord. This baby was given to them for such a time as this, for training to the Lord. And to literally do a Hannah with Samuel thing. Here he is. Here she is. Use him or her for your kingdom.

Ashley: I think that's great, really powerful at the same time. We have our kids, not me, but when I do have kids, I have them for a certain time, and that's a huge blessing. But at the same time, there's a point they will have to move on and out of my house. Just hopefully impact the kingdom even more.

What do you do when one spouse isn't as interested in God's word? I've been really blessed that my spouse is and he leads me. But what do you do whether you're a mom with a husband who's not as interested or a husband with a wife who's not as interested? How do you continue to train your kids even if one's not as interested in it?

Tristie: That's such a good question, and when you and your mom mentioned it, I thought that was fantastic. I'm going to say statistically, it's men who will struggle with spiritual interest over the momma. There's something in a mother that says church is good and the golden rule is a great thing, and 10 commandments. But you'll see, how many books have been written through Christian book distributors that say, why do men hate church? We have far more females and leadership within Christian ministry.

I would say it was two fold, honestly. Number one is not your children. Your number one deal is to pray for your man or if you're the husband, pray for your woman. Pray that they come to Christ. Pray that they see a need for a savior. Pray that they see that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the

life. And again, all the way back to point one that you and I started with, live a Christian life.

I don't know how many couples I see, one is a believer, a Christian, someone who has received Christ as savior. And one is not. And then you watch their marriage. He doesn't speak encouragingly to her. She doesn't speak encouragingly to her. They are more concerned about their own rights and constantly arguing. There's no sacrificial love between the two of them. In that situation, step one is growing your marriage. Whether you need help through your pastor, marital counseling or professional therapy, we are all about it. Your kids have got to see a healthy marriage if you want them to have one.

First of all, the two most important people in that relationship are the husband and wife, and they have got to decide, how are we going to do this? And they have to have those moments of will you forgive me? And discipline themselves to encourage one another. The kids are watching them. My son is already making the gross face when my husband kisses me. And yet he knows that daddy kisses momma and tells her all about how he loves her.

First things first. Start with your marriage. Grow your marriage. And then the second thing is I've been very surprised to see lately that most non-Christian spouses, married to a Christian spouse are pretty cool about their kid going to a Christian, Catholic, Methodist, Episcopalian school, because there's something in almost every person that says, it's good to teach your kids rules and to teach them to obey. Many women are like, I've been praying for him for 5 years, and their kids are in a Christian school. In that situation, I think it can happen, and I've been surprised to see it happen so much.

But back to point one, living a Christian life, I think that's a serious conversation people need to have. And if the husband is predominately against a Christian education, I would ask a lot of questions. Why do you feel like that? I know for one individual in particular that I am related to, he is not into the Christian schooling thing, because he went to a school where they beat them if they didn't have the answer. He doesn't think that's too cool.

I think it's important for the husband and wife to sit down, talk about. Why do you disagree? What do you think is good about a Christian school. Hang out with a couple who has their kids in a Christian school. What do you think is good about this? What are the cons? And then hang out with folks whose kids are in a public school, but have a spiritual influence. What's good here? What's the cons?

There's almost no question in my mind, the first thing is that the husband and wife have got to align themselves with where they are martially and then they can discuss the spiritual condition of their children.

Ashley: I agree. I remember my parents, both of them are solid Christians. But at the same time, they made sure to have date nights, and they worked on their marriage. Because there is one day when we won't be at the house and not everything will revolve around us. They really worked on that at the same time. It was always something first and foremost in their mind.

Tristie: It gives security to the child. When little children see that mommy and daddy love each other and they're going to keep their promise to stay together no matter what, it gives them security. I think that is probably the key principle I would say for influencing your children. Let them see, even in situations where my kids argue and fight, I can say to my son, have you ever seen your daddy talk to me like that? And he's like, no. Or to my daughter. Have you ever seen mommy react to daddy like that?

Not because we're super humans. Because we've been saved. And we sin a lot. We had decided years and years ago to have a discipline to speak kindly to one another and to love each other well, because we knew we wanted them to have good marriages. And we wanted to begin that revolution of 5 dynasties down kids are walking with the Lord and blessing you family.

Ashley: One question I'm asking all of our speakers is what are you passionate about? What lights your fire?

Tristie: I will tell you, Ashley, my sweet friend. The Word, baby. And here's why I say that, almost every day of my life, I am 41 years old. I think to myself, I live a princess life. I have a husband who loves me and treats me kindly. God answered my miracles prayers. Lots of pain, lots of blessing, and I have a family of two little children that I almost dreamed of.

I didn't always have a spiritual life, but made that choice for myself when I was 19. I'm kind of surprised I got invited to the party. I just feel a great indebtedness to Christ that I came to know him as a 19 year old. In all of that, I have a home, I have heat, I have air conditioning, I'm not living in a 3rd world country. In all of those glorious blessings, there is one thing that gives me constant security, constant joy, and constant significance, and it's the word of God.

The reason I say that is I think a lot of girls get married, have babies, a lot of single gals, married gals, get these rocking careers going. They're making millions of dollars. They're buying things that they thought would make them happy. And it doesn't. But the only thing that literally feeds

my soul is reading the word. And it's not even an emotional thing. The Word of God feeds my soul, strengthens me. It's a strong tower I can run to when I'm afraid, nervous, and he is always with me.

You and I both have that promise. Jesus said, I will be with you always. And he is. God's word is speaking to me. Prayer is me talking to God. God's word is him speaking to me. And so I would say even more in the last few words, looking around at all my happy-happy joy-joy life, I would say the word of God I just feel I'm in love with it, it feeds me, it changes me, it grows me, and it's my greatest passion. I want to grow as much as I can before I see his face, if that makes sense.

Ashley: That's neat. I really like that. That's a good goal. Because a lot of times, and maybe it's because I've grown up more in a Christian setting, I always thought I had to strive for perfection. Because Christ is perfect, and we should be just like Christ. That's a great idea, but it's never going to happen. Just to strive for the idea to grow as much as we can in God's word. It's a neat way to look at.

Tristie: I love how you say, there is this conception. Jesus is perfect, so we should be too. I don't see that anywhere in the Bible. Literally he says, obey me, follow me. There's going to be suffering. You're going to fall away. Come back. Come back. Come back.

And that's the glory of it. It really is grace. I'm going to sin today, tomorrow, I'm going to mess up. And his grace, and the freedom of that, I can't lose his love. That's what fuels part of that passion for God's word.

Ashley: That's neat. I know your kids are still young, so I'm not sure if you can answer this question, but I'm asking people if you could start child raising over again, is there anything you would do differently knowing what you know now?

Tristie: Ashley, that's a fabulous question. Seriously, as a former journalist, that's a question. I love it. Yes, I would say. I look back, and I'm thankful and I'm grateful, and I feel like we've done a good job. My favorite thing I've done with kids on the flip side of this quickly is I've spent lots of time with them. I think that's where we miss it or we get it. You either have a 14 year old and you're trying to get into his life, and he's like, where you been?

Or you have an 8 and 5 year old, hopefully a 14 year old, who says, mom can you live? Give me a kiss and go. Thanks for coming.

My goal is to be with them, be with them, be with them. If I had to do it over again, I would teach them more about the world and the issue of we

have such a materialistic society. And literally, I'm watching kids as young as 8 and 5 walking around with iPods. Granted, is a cell phone for an emergency for a junior high kid, okay. But I would say I would not have allowed them so much technological information, so many video games, so much computer access. My kids love to read, like I love to read. And that's been one of my things this year. Ever since they were born, they've had this much TV time. You get to watch [36:50] and eat your Cheerios. But I watched it very carefully the first three years with my son. Then my daughter came along, and you know how it is. The second child comes along, you get a loosey goose there.

Sure you can have a drink, of Coke. Have some sugar, everybody. I let that slip, I feel like. I let them watch more even Christian, it doesn't matter to me. Any kind of video, I think I've let them watch too much video, too much computer games, and we even have time limits on it. But still I have noticed too much TV, too much video. We don't own a Gameboy, but too much Gameboy. It takes about 30 minutes for them to detox that out of their head and to get back to speaking to a human being. It takes that much time to think. We live in Texas heat, which is like living in you know where.

But I love fall coming, because I know they're not going to be trapped in the house anymore. We've tried every trick in the book to entertain ourselves. We just got done with the Legos video game. We can be outside biking, building, things like that. We've done pretty good, but I would say definite source of improvement would be less video and less technology. They can maneuver around a computer, and I'm glad, because they're going to do that for a living, but you can do an hour of Little House on the Prairie and pretty much be done for the day. You don't need to watch 3-4 hours of a television program.

And interestingly, I have a friend my age, and I said, what's the one thing you wanted your mom to do differently? And she said, she put me in front of a TV 4 hours a day. I was like, I'm only doing an hour and a half. And that even convicted me.

So I think that's one thing I might not try to strive to be supermom. Everybody needs to put in Thomas the Train when you're cooking dinner before your man walks in. And everybody needs grace, because we live in grace. But I feel like if I had a self-improvement goal, that might be it.

Ashley: That's neat.

Tristie: Good question, sweetie. I appreciate you asking me that. Makes me think.

Ashley: With this being back to school, and I know your kids just get started back at school, do you have any advice for parents getting started right now. I know a lot of our listeners are home schooling, so they're in the planning process and hopefully starting in the next couple of weeks, but even just as a parent. If your kids are in private school or home schooling or public school.

Tristie: Again, you and I talked about this a few minutes ago, but I am convinced kids thrive on order. When kids know what's coming, life is a lot easier. You don't have a lot of blow-up tantrums. We call it freakage. My kids know, and this is fun to share with you because I've written it up but never gotten to share it with a broader audience. For me, my kids go to school. They're involved within a private Christian program that's half day school, and the other half of the day is, I don't have the courage to call myself a home school mom. I call myself a home work mom.

They both go from 8:30 to 12:30 to a program called CORE where they do a lot of core principles, classics. And what's amazing to me, I substitute taught in public schools. My mother was very active in the public school system in Oklahoma on boards and things of that nature. What I liked about CORE in [college basin] is that it ends at 12:30 is it takes an hour to take 28 first year graders to go to the bathroom, and to have lunch, and to have recess, and I thought, and Brian and I both agree, we wanted that time for ourselves.

We have the best of both worlds. We have a pseudo-home schooling thing going on in the afternoon, but they also go to a private Christian school in the morning. For them, they expect to go to school 8:30 to 12:30. They expect mommy and daddy or grandma and granddad to pick them up. We come home, we have lunch, and I have a tradition called a Sabbath, which is a Hebrew word for rest. I'm convinced our kids are way over stimulated in this generation. It makes me nervous.

So we rest, and they eat their lunch, 30-45 minutes. Very grace oriented. They love to talk about their day, and then once we've had that rest and eating time, that's when we do our homework, and we work for about an hour and a half, sometimes an hour and 45. And we complete all that's required for that day, and then we do something like run through the sprinklers with popsicles, or build a fort, or play with mommy, or play a board game of some kind.

And then we wait for daddy to come home for dinner, and then now we're doing some evening activities. But even with my son at the end of the night, my husband, he's still my review, multiplication facts. Whatever what child is struggling with. But we read to our kids. And we try to keep the schedule the same for every single day. And for three years Ben has

been totally used to it, and now Joy's getting used to it too. And she's watched Ben do it, so she knows how we do it.

But the Sabbath part is super important to me. I've been around too many school playgrounds where I literally hear parents say, where are we all going to lunch? Let's go have a play date, right now. And these play dates are 2 and 3 hours, and I'm like, where are you getting your time with the child? And when does that homework happen? Maybe they do it at night. I don't know. To each his own, I suppose. But for us, it really works to have that rest time. From 8:30 to 12:30, they're inundated and stimulated. Other children, lots of activity. And I just really believe that 30-minute rest period right after school, where you have lunch and you connect back with mommy, and then you move into your work.

I think that is a key thing for home school moms, co op moms, even public school moms. Set a schedule. I made one for my son, one for my daughter, and I put it on the fridge, and they know what's coming next. There's so much freedom in that.

Ashley: That's neat. That's a great idea to keep you from going insane, as a parent.

Tristie: And literally, when you guys have kids, they are a million activities that you are offered to be involved in. And you have to make that decision. Are we going to be exhausted, or are we really going to enrich our family life and get to know each other? You have to say, we're only going to do one sport per semester, because we really value that crazy Scrabble game on Wednesday nights. There's something special about that, and like you said, and I'm seeing it myself now Ashley, it's going by very fast. I want to be 55 years old, 60 years old, and say, we spent time together. I did it in the power of the spirit, a broken woman who needed Jesus, who loves them, prays for them, and equipped and guided them.

Ashley: It's cool to hear you say it from a kid's perspective. Being just married, I'm really trying to learn that from a married perspective. It's okay to say no and to be home at night even if other couples are out doing things. It's good to be at home at nights and just have you and husband time.

Tristie: Beside your best friend. What I love about how you're doing this is that you're thinking of it now, even before that 9 month pregnancy. For those folks who are just married or just pregnant, you can write down those ideas and goals and begin to think, what do we want? There is massive pressure. I deal with women all of the time, young mothers, who will ask me literally, is it okay to stay home?

I'm not kidding. It is incredible. Or do we drag them to Cheddars at 9 p.m. for dinner? Think about what you loved about your childhood. Think about the regularity of that. And think about what's best for your child.

Ashley: That's cool. Before we wrap it up today, is there a way our listeners can get back in touch with you if they want to learn more about you or have questions.

Tristie: Sure, I would love it. Let me give you my website. It's probably the best thing. One day at dinner, we had some company at dinner, and they said, how do you say your mom's first name, because I have an unusual first name, and my daughter said www.tristiefisher.com. That is the address.

And what you'll find on there is a friend of mine built my website. A fantastic story. She trusted Christ in her car with me in an El Chico parking lot 25 years ago. And now she's doing children's ministry in West Waco, Texas, and she is a web machine, and a godly woman. And a wonderful mother. She built my system for me, so on that web page you can find everything from how to take a sick day with your kids, that part of mothering that can make you ballistic and you need some breathing time. Ideas for playing with kids. I have a Bible study I just finished writing this summer about the book of John called *Living Water for a Thirsty Soul*. There's a Bible study there. There's articles on forgiveness, great marriages, child raising. Hopefully some funny stuff in there. And that's a fantastic way.

And then let me give you an email address too, which might be more personal for some folks. Tristief@juno.com. And that's another way to get a hold of me too.

Ashley: Thank you so much for your time today. I know I've taken lots of great notes for future reference.

Tristie: You are so sweet and precious to us, and we love you and your family so much. And your parents have been one of the best examples we've ever had.

Ashley: Good. I'll let them know.

Tristie: On one of those hard days, you can say, by the way. You're the best ever.

Ashley: Thank you so much.

Resources

Tristie Fisher:

www.TristieFisher.com

Christian Parenting Association

Informal & Conversational Interviews with 16 Top Homeschooling Experts – Not a Formal Presentation, but questions you'd like to ask our experts!

www.HomeschoolSuperHeroes.com

FREEBIES: Monday Meals, Tuesday Tips, Wednesday Words, Thursday Tools and much more:

www.CurriculumConnection.net/blog

How to Get It All Done-FREE Report

www.CurriculumConnection.net

FREE Mini Course on Teaching Writing

www.HowToTeachWriting.com

12 Month Christian Parenting Course

www.ChristianParentingAssociation.org