A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a blue pen, poised to write on a notebook. The hand is wearing a grey, textured knit sleeve. In the background, a white cup of coffee sits on a wooden surface. The overall scene is warm and focused on the act of writing or learning.

# *A Gentle Start* Resources

A Companion Guide to  
*A Gentle Start to Homeschooling:*  
*A Step-by-Step Guide to Building the Homeschool Life You're Dreaming Of*

Tina Bassett

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# Homeschool Vision Worksheet

## *Companion to Chapter 2: Vision Before Curriculum*

Before you choose a curriculum or make a plan, you need to know *where you're going*—and *why*. This worksheet will guide you through imagining, praying over, and writing a vision statement that reflects your heart, your goals, and your family's calling.

### Step 1: The Party Question

Imagine you are at a party with your adult children. Someone asks them, "What did you love most about being homeschooled?" What do you hope they say? Let your imagination roam. What do you want to be true of your homeschool legacy? What I hope my children say about their homeschool experience?:

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### Step 2: The Real-Life Vision

Now, reflect on the kind of life and learning you want to cultivate.

**Our family life priorities include:** (Circle all that apply or write your own)

Faith and Scripture as the foundation

Freedom to explore and play

Strong family relationships

Nature and outdoor learning

A peaceful home atmosphere

Service and character development

Creativity and the arts

Financial stewardship and life skills

Preparation for college and future careers

Academic rigor and excellence

Space for each child's unique path

Mastery in specific subject areas  
(e.g., math, writing, science, music)

Other: -----

What kind of atmosphere do I want in our home? (peaceful, structured, flexible, joyful, curious, slow, playful, reverent, etc.)

What values shape your family?

What subjects matter most to you?

What do you want to prioritize in this season?

What role should academics play in our family life? (Consider balance, expectations, subjects of focus, and how they support your broader goals)

Are there specific subjects, skills, or outcomes we want to emphasize? (Examples: financial literacy, STEM, languages, logic, theology, writing, etc.)

What is my role as a parent in this journey? (Teacher, coach, spiritual guide, nurturer, facilitator, etc.)



Here is an example:

*We want our children to:*

- *Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ*
- *Be well-versed in the scriptures with an understanding of how to study them, their cultural context, how to apply them, and have a large bank of memorized scripture*
- *Be family-centric, with strong, healthy relationships between themselves and their parents and siblings*
- *Love learning and know how to learn independently*
- *Be strong readers who understand and appreciate classic literature and its relevance in modern times*
- *Be strong communicators in both verbal and written form and in formal and informal settings*
- *Have a decent mastery of at least one of the arts and an appreciation for all of them*
- *Be confident in their ability to function in the world on their own through the acquisition of life skills, such as: meal planning, cooking, cleaning, gardening, basic home and auto maintenance, etc.*
- *Have strong time management skills*
- *Know how to keep their bodies and minds healthy through proper nutrition and a regular exercise program*
- *Be technologically savvy with a working knowledge of the technology needed to function in the modern world, but also the ability to unplug, creating a healthy, balanced relationship*
- *Be at least conversational in a foreign language*
- *Have a strong sense of financial literacy, including budgeting, responsible credit, frugality, saving, and giving*

# Fear vs. Truth Chart

## *Companion to Chapter 4: Facing Your Fears*

Homeschooling can bring up big fears - some whispered by our own insecurity, others loudly voiced by people around us. But the truth of God's Word always stands stronger. Below are some of the most common homeschool fears, answered with encouragement and biblical truth.

Fear	Truth	Scripture of Encouragement
<i>I'm going to mess this up.</i>	God equips those He calls. You don't have to be perfect to be faithful.	"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." - 1 Thess. 5:24
<i>My kids will fall behind.</i>	Behind whom? God has no standard timeline—just the right path for your child.	"Train up a child in the way he should go..." - Prov. 22:6
<i>I'm not smart enough to teach them.</i>	You don't have to know everything—you just have to walk beside them.	"He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." - Daniel 2:21
<i>What if they can't get into college?</i>	Homeschoolers attend college, earn scholarships, and succeed. Your faithfulness will bear fruit.	"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap..." - Galatians 6:9
<i>They won't be socialized.</i>	Real-life socialization happens in families, churches, neighborhoods, and communities —not age-segregated classrooms.	Jesus grew "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." - Luke 2:52
<i>People will judge me.</i>	Courage in obedience is worth more than the approval of others.	"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." - Prov. 29:25

*What if I fail and ruin their future?*

You're not their Savior, but God is.  
Trust Him to fill in every gap.

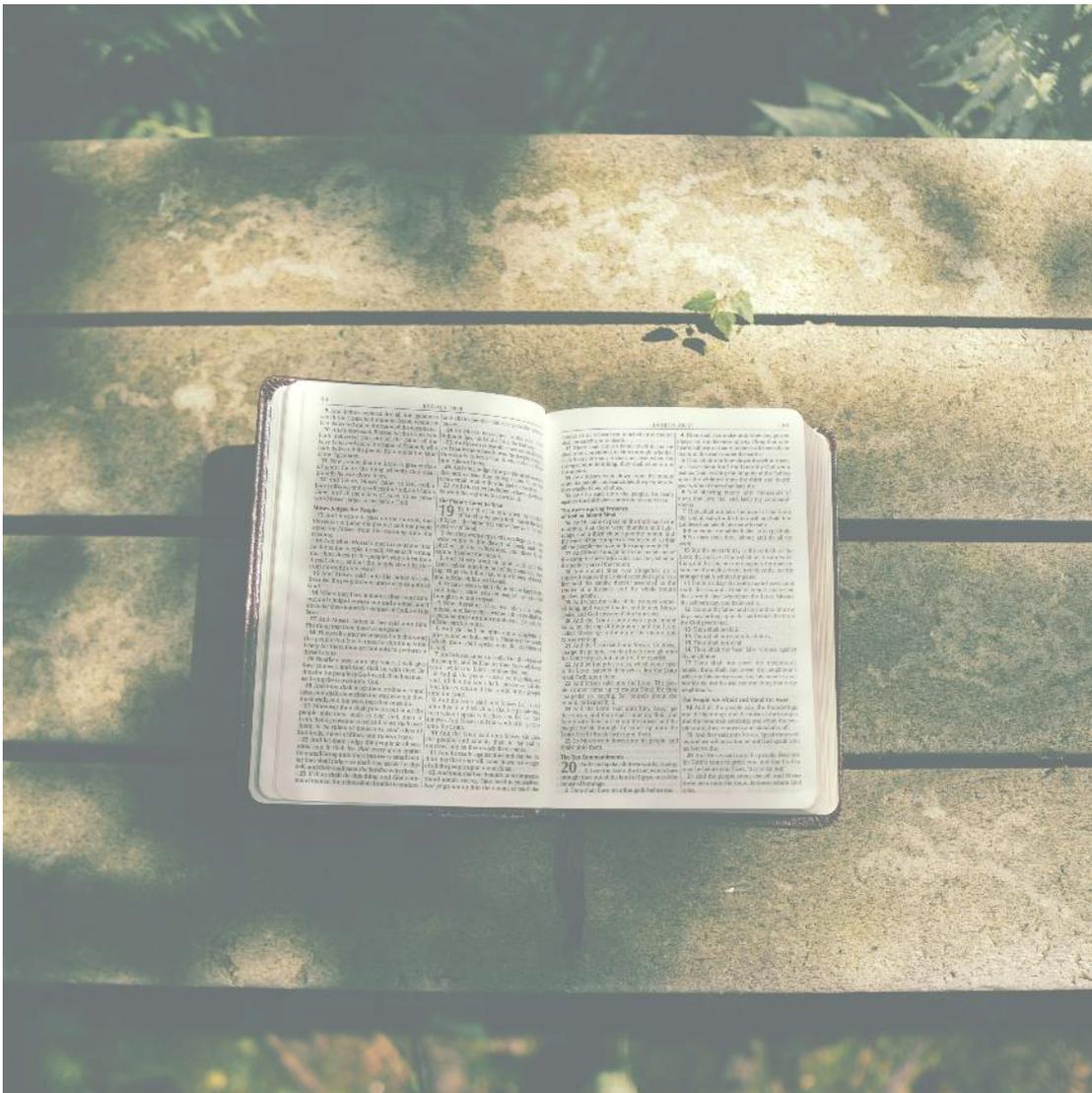
"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." - 2 Cor. 12:9

*I don't know where to begin.*

Start with prayer, vision, and relationship. Everything else follows.

"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." - Prov. 16:3

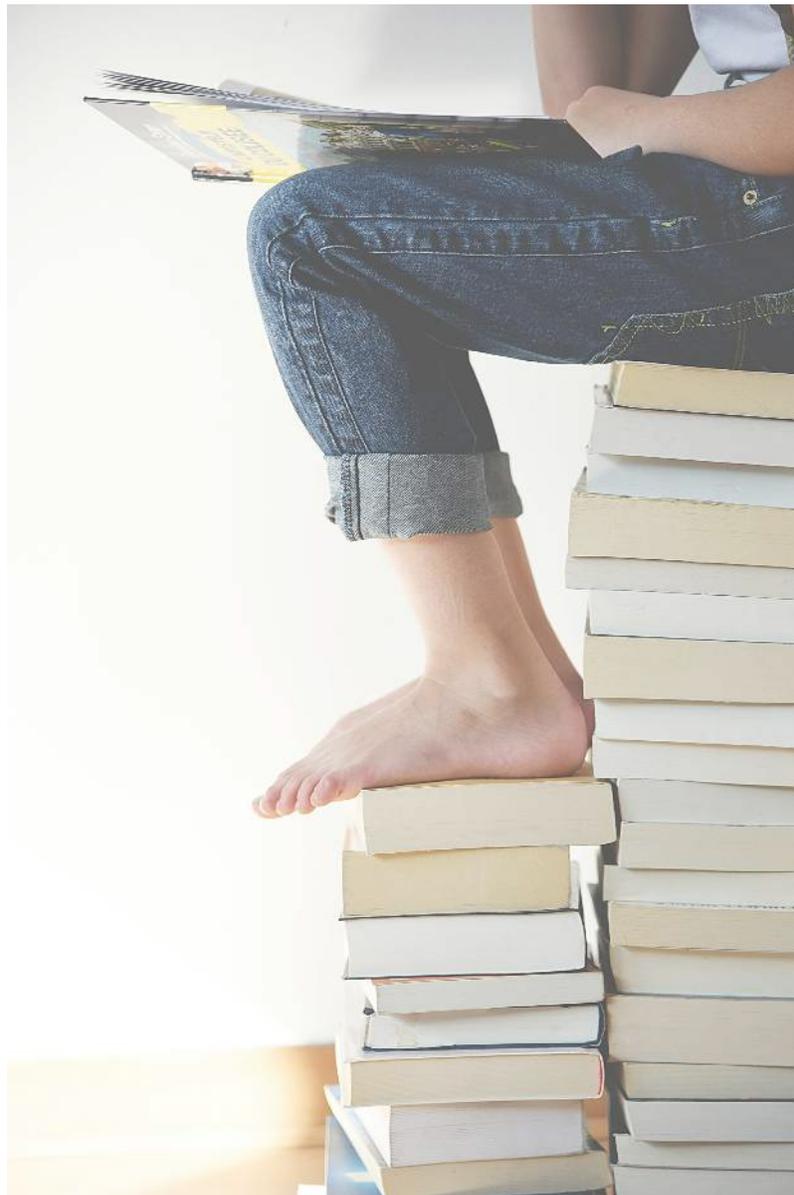
*Use this chart as a prayer guide. When fear speaks up, respond with God's truth. You're not walking this road alone.*



# Homeschool Philosophy Quiz

## *Companion to Chapter 6: Discovering Your Philosophy of Education*

Before you choose curriculum, it helps to understand your family's natural rhythms, values, and learning styles. This quiz is not meant to box you in, but it is a tool to help you identify which homeschool approaches may best fit your family and your God-given vision. You'll likely resonate with more than one style, and that's perfectly okay.



Instructions: Read each question and choose the option that best describes your family or ideals.

**1. When I picture our homeschool, I imagine:**

- a. Nature walks, read-alouds, and narration
- b. A structured routine with defined subjects and objectives
- c. Days led by curiosity and creativity
- d. Family-style learning around shared topics and hands-on projects
- e. A mix of methods that flexes with our needs and goals

**2. I believe the primary goal of education is to:**

- a. Cultivate character, wonder, and virtue
- b. Develop a strong academic foundation and reasoning skills
- c. Encourage self-motivated learning and exploration
- d. Make meaningful connections between subjects
- e. Prepare my child for life, faith, and whatever God calls them to

**3. Our family thrives best with:**

- a. A gentle rhythm and rich literature
- b. Clear expectations, timelines, and measurable outcomes
- c. Freedom to pursue interests without pressure
- d. Shared experiences, interactive lessons, and creative projects
- e. A flexible mix of structure and spontaneity

**4. My ideal curriculum is:**

- a. Literature-based with time for nature and art
- b. Textbook-based with strong academic progression
- c. Open-ended or minimalist, allowing us to follow our lead
- d. Theme-based and adaptable across multiple age levels
- e. Modular or customizable—something I can tailor year to year

**5. My child(ren) learn best through:**

- a. Reading, listening, and observing beauty
- b. Direct instruction and mastery-based repetition
- c. Self-directed exploration and conversation
- d. Projects, experiments, and group discussions
- e. A little bit of everything depending on the day

**6. Faith is:**

- a. Gently woven into our books and habits
- b. Studied in a separate Bible class or devotion
- c. Integrated organically throughout our day
- d. Reflected in our discussions and character lessons
- e. Foundational to everything we do in homeschool

**Note:** Most homeschool styles can be taught with either Christian or secular resources. No matter your style, it's possible to center Christ in your homeschool.

**7. I worry most about:**

- a. Losing sight of my child's heart in the academic rush
- b. Gaps in learning or falling behind peers
- c. Burnout or resistance from overly rigid plans
- d. Disconnection between what we're learning and why it matters
- e. Not enjoying the journey or missing God's purpose in it

**8. I measure success by:**

- a. Growth in habits, attention, and love of learning
- b. Academic progress and well-prepared transcripts
- c. Joyful learning and self-initiated projects
- d. Shared enthusiasm and completed unit work
- e. Spiritual maturity, relational peace, and readiness for life

**9. I get frustrated when:**

- a. Our days feel rushed or filled with busywork
- b. We don't finish everything on the checklist
- c. I'm told what to do instead of finding our own rhythm
- d. Learning feels shallow or disconnected
- e. We lose sight of our big-picture vision and peace

**10. My favorite school moments are:**

- a. Reading together by the fireplace or outside
- b. Seeing a child master a tough concept
- c. Watching a spark of interest grow into deep knowledge
- d. Building something, acting out a story, or doing science as a group
- e. Unexpected breakthroughs, deep conversations, and time together

**11. My approach to planning is:**

- a. Gentle and seasonal, with room for beauty and rest
- b. Structured and mapped out with long-term goals in mind
- c. Minimal and flexible—we follow what's working
- d. Theme-based or unit-focused across subjects
- e. Open to change—I adapt as we go and learn

**12. When it comes to grades and testing:**

- a. I prefer observations and discussions over formal tests
- b. I want my kids to be ready for college entrance exams
- c. We rarely test—real life shows what they've learned
- d. We assess through final projects or review games
- e. I keep records for peace of mind but don't stress over scores

**13. When my child struggles, I:**

- a. Slow down and work on habits, attention, and confidence
- b. Intervene with more instruction or a new method
- c. Let them rest, then find a more personal way to explore the idea
- d. Re-frame the concept through a hands-on project or story
- e. Pray, pivot, and adapt—what works now may change later

**14. I want my kids to graduate with:**

- a. A deep love of learning and strong moral character
- b. Strong academic preparation and self-discipline
- c. The confidence to learn anything they need, when they need it
- d. A wide range of knowledge and problem-solving skills
- e. A solid foundation in faith, family, and practical wisdom

**15. Our homeschool year is most successful when:**

- a. We follow peaceful rhythms and delight in our lessons
- b. We stay on track and finish the curriculum
- c. We explore new things and grow in independence
- d. We build, create, discover, and grow closer as a family
- e. We walk in peace, follow God's lead, and trust the journey

# Tally Your Results:

- Count how many A, B, C, D, and E answers you selected.
- Your top 1–2 letters will help you identify your homeschool philosophy or blend.

A\_\_\_\_\_ B\_\_\_\_\_ C\_\_\_\_\_ D\_\_\_\_\_ E\_\_\_\_\_

## Results:

### Mostly A – Charlotte Mason

You're drawn to a life-giving education built on living books, nature study, habit formation, and the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness. You view education as an atmosphere and a discipline.

### Mostly B – Classical

You value structure, logic, and rigorous academics rooted in timeless truths. You see education as a path to wisdom and virtue, and want your children to develop strong critical thinking skills.

### Mostly C – Unschooling / Interest-Led Learning

You believe learning is most powerful when it's personally meaningful. You prioritize freedom, trust, and relationship, and value the whole child over artificial standards.

### Mostly D – Unit Study / Project-Based / Eclectic

You love learning that's active, connected, and shared. You thrive with creative, theme-based approaches and enjoy teaching multiple ages together with flexibility and fun.

### Mostly E – Eclectic / Whole-Life Learner

You adapt based on the season, the subject, and the student. You borrow from multiple methods and prioritize what works in real life. You care about heart, habits, and adaptability.

*Remember: no single style is the "right" one. You are free to blend, adapt, and grow. This is just a starting point to help you walk forward with clarity.*



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# Before You Buy Curriculum Worksheet

## *Companion to Chapter 7: Choosing Curriculum with Confidence*

Before you add anything to your cart, pause and reflect. This worksheet helps you evaluate if a curriculum aligns with your family's vision, values, and educational goals. Use it each time you're considering a new resource, whether free or paid.

### Step 1: Restate Your Vision

Write out your homeschool vision or summarize what matters most to your family. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Step 2: Describe the Curriculum

Name of Curriculum: \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject Area: \_\_\_\_\_  
Intended Age/Grade Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Faith-Based or Secular Option? \_\_\_\_\_  
Format: (e.g., textbook, online, video, print, literature-based, project-based) \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 3: Evaluate the Fit

Does this curriculum:

- Support our homeschool vision and long-term goals?
- Align with our child's learning style?
- Complement our teaching style and time availability?
- Offer flexibility if we need to slow down, skip lessons, or adapt?
- Reinforce our values and worldview?
- Provide enough (or too much) structure for our season of life?
- Fit our budget?
- Require additional materials or subscriptions? (If so, list them below.)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Budget-Friendly Resource Guide

## *Companion to Chapter 7: Choosing Curriculum with Confidence*

You don't need an overflowing Amazon cart or fancy boxed set to homeschool well. There are rich, meaningful, and high-quality resources available for free or on a budget. While nowhere near a comprehensive list, this guide is a starting place to help you explore and equip without overspending.

**Freedom Homeschooling** – A comprehensive list of available free homeschooling curricula and resources arranged by subject

**Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool** – A highly structured Christian program providing 180 days of lessons for all subjects, from preschool through high school

**Ambleside Online** – A free, literature-rich curriculum based on the Charlotte Mason method, emphasizing classic literature and nature study

**Core Knowledge Foundation** – Offers free downloadable curriculum materials for Preschool through Grade 8, covering language arts, science, and history

**Mater Amabilis** – A free, Catholic Charlotte Mason curriculum offering structured, literature-rich plans from early years through high school

**Georgia Virtual Learning** - Offers free, full-length courses, including AP and high school-level, for public use (don't have to be in Georgia to use)

**The Good and the Beautiful** – Free, downloadable full curriculum of some levels of Language Arts, Science, and Math

**Khan Academy** – A free online program with self-paced lessons and practice in math, science, history, and more

**Cursa** - A free platform with thousands of online courses and certificates for teens to explore electives and career interests

# Library Hacks

- Interlibrary Loan** Ask your library to borrow books from other systems
- Audiobooks** Use apps like Libby, Hoopla, and OverDrive
- Homeschool Classes** Many libraries offer free events or programs
- Book Baskets** Reserve themed books for history, science, or seasons
- Library as Office** Use quiet hours for homeschool planning & refreshment

# Digital Tools & Printables

- Teachers Pay Teachers** Search for free/low-cost printables by grade & subject
- NotebookingPages.com** Free and paid nature study, Bible, history pages
- Wild + Free Printables** Faith-based Charlotte Mason-style content
- Twinkl** Secular but broad resource for multi-age learners
- Pinterest** Search by unit, book, or age for lapbooks & projects
- YouTube** Channels like Homeschool Pop, SciShow Kids, Crash Course, Bible Project
- Hillsdale Online Courses** Free, online college level courses with suggested additional readings and quizzes

**Bonus Tip: Start Simple.** You don't have to buy a whole year at once. Start with the basics (Bible, math, reading), then layer in the rest as you go. Keep a running list of "nice to haves" and revisit it as budget and vision allow.

# One-Room Schoolhouse Planning Guide

## *Companion to Chapter 9: One-Room Schoolhouse*

### Group Subject Suggestions by Age

Subject	All Ages Together	Age-Specific Adaptations
Bible / Devotions	Family reading, prayer, verse memory	Older: journaling, apologetics  Younger: coloring pages, simple songs
History	Read-alouds, projects, timelines	Older: write summaries, research  Younger: narrate, draw pictures
Science	Nature study, experiments, field trips	Older: labs, written reports  Younger: observe, discuss, simple books
Music & Art	Composer/art study, family singing, crafts	Older: practice instrument, technique  Younger: sing, explore freely
Literature	Family read-alouds, discussion	Older: literary analysis  Younger: picture narration, retelling
Handicrafts / Life Skills	Cooking, sewing, gardening	Assign complexity by age

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# Reflection Activities

## Chapter 2: Writing Your Homeschool Vision

The worksheet for this Reflection Activity is on p. 4 of this document.

## Chapter 4: Name the Fear, Invite the Father

It can help to pull those swirling thoughts out of your head and look at them in the light.

Sometime this week, find a quiet pocket of time and jot down your answers to these questions:

- What am I most afraid of in homeschooling?
- Where did that fear come from?
- What lie is that fear speaking over me?
- What truth does God speak in response?

Write them down. Then offer them back to Him.

God is not waiting for you to get yourself together before He shows up. He wants to meet you right in the middle of the mess. In the insecurity. In the comparison. In the doubt.

Invite Him into those places. Watch how gently He leads you out.

## Chapter 8: What Kind of Planner Are You?

Ask yourself:

- Do I thrive on structure, or do I feel confined by it?
- Do I want to plan by the hour, the subject, or the season?
- What rhythms have helped your family flourish in the past (even outside of homeschool)?

You are allowed to grow into your planning style. It may take some trial and error, a few abandoned planners, and a couple of "Well, we won't do it like that again" moments. That's okay. You're learning, too.

## Chapter 9: One Family, Many Ages

Take a moment to consider:

- What could we start doing together each day or week?
- Which subjects could we combine instead of separating by grade?
- Where could my older children take one small step toward more independence?
- How might I include my toddler or preschooler with intention instead of frustration?

You don't have to get it perfect. Just look for one gentle change that will make your days more connected and less fragmented.

## Chapter 10: When It's "Just Us"

Sometime this week, curl up with a notebook and a quiet moment and consider:

- What have I secretly believed about what a "real" homeschool family looks like?
- • Where am I trying to make up for having one child by doing more, more, more?
- • What are three specific gifts I see in our "just us" homeschool?
- • What is one simple way I can seek healthy community for my child—and for myself—this season?

Write them down. Offer both the ache and the gratitude back to the Lord. Ask Him to show you how He sees your family.

## Chapter 11: What's Wearing You Down?

Take a few quiet minutes, maybe with a cup of something warm, and ask yourself:

- What has felt heavy in our homeschool lately?
- What is one thing I could loosen, lay down, or change?
- Where have I been hustling for my worth instead of resting in God's love?

You don't have to fix everything at once. Just bring one burden at a time to the Lord.

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee." (Psalm 55:22)

## Chapter 12: Who's In Your Circle?

Take a moment and think about your life right now:

- Who is pouring into me, even a little?
- Who is walking beside me?
- Who might God be asking me to gently encourage?

If one of those categories is empty, bring that to the Lord in prayer. Ask Him to fill the gap in His way, in His time.

You don't have to manufacture community. But you can be ready and willing when He opens the door.

### Final Reflection

Write any other thoughts that God puts on your heart here:

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