

My little mother went to be with Jesus this week. A column about Christian parenting is the perfect place to honor her memory. Our world would be a better place if there were more moms still raising kids the way she did.

Mom taught me my Christian faith. I remember walking to church as a family. She taught the five-year-old Sunday school class. That must have been difficult for her, as she was the type to do her ministry quietly in the background. When we went into “big church” I knew exactly how quiet and how still I had to be. I was expected to participate in a discussion of the sermon as we walked home.

She read Bible stories to me until my little children’s Bible was falling to pieces. I had to memorize Psalm 23, the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed before I started to school. In my five-year-old opinion, they were much too long for someone my age! I tried to opt for shorter memory assignments, but she prevailed.

Mom played with my brother and me. She got into the finger paint, the mud, the sandbox, the London Bridge games and the trees with us. She let us make messes in her kitchen as we stirred, licked beaters, sprinkled sugar on cookies and mixed the color capsule into the bag of “oleomargarine.” Some afternoons, she grabbed a basket of fruit and took us down to the river to wade, splash and hunt for treasures. She always had time to stop what she was doing and “Come look!” When we got our “tickle boxes turned over,” she was down on the floor laughing with us until the tears ran down our faces.

Mom was a tough disciplinarian. I had to pick my own “switches” off a tree when I needed a spanking. When I used a “dirty” word, I had my mouth washed out with a big bar of Ivory soap. And, Mom used “time-out” before the educators had ever heard of it.

Other than the Christian heritage that she gave me, the most important thing that my mom did for me was to love my dad. There was never any doubt that Mom and Dad were a team. From the time Dad first saw that little redheaded fourteen-year-old who lived down the road until he died fifty-eight years later, they were sweethearts. Today, I am rejoicing that they are together again singing praises in the presence of God.