

Rachel Winchester: 0:02

The great thing about homeschooling these days is you can talk to people who were homeschooled, who are now homeschooling their own kids. You can hear their story, learn from their mistakes, and take notes on their victories. Today, we are sharing the story of a family who found peace in their homeschooling experience when they stopped doing school at home and embraced a research based literature rich approach. You're listening to the Homeschool Made Simple podcast with Carol Joy Seid. This is a podcast to help you homeschool simply, inexpensively, and enjoyably. Carol has been helping families homeschool for over 30 years now, and today's guest attended her seminar over 20 years ago. Following Carol's method changed their family and brought a lot of peace to their home. You're going to love this interview with Connie Wright and Ashley Becker as they share their story of how homeschooling changed their family's life. Listen in.

Carole Joy Seid: 0:58

So welcome, friends. I am sitting across the Zoom screen with 2 amazing ladies that I want you to get to know. The first is missus Connie Wright, and she is a veteran homeschool mom. And now I'm working with her daughter, Ashley Becker, who is homeschooling the next generation. And I'm so thrilled to have both of you ladies here to share your story. We're thrilled to be here. Thank you for having us. So, Ashley, when we consulted recently, first, tell us a little bit about your family, your children, and what your husband does for a living. I think it's interesting for people to know. Yes.

Ashley Becker: 1:39

My husband is a hero. He is, military doctor. He's doctor in the air force. So he's gone sometimes with that. And we have 4 children. We have a 7 year old, a 6 year old, a 4 year old, and a 15 month old.

Carole Joy Seid: 1:54

That's beautiful. And Mrs. Connie, tell us a little bit about you and your family.

Connie Wright: 2:01

Well, I've been married to my husband Dave for 35 years. He is former military, so I know a little bit of the Air Force life, and then he worked for FedEx, and he has recently retired. He's been retired for 3 years. And we had Ashley as our oldest, and we have a son, Curtis, who's 29, almost 30.

Carole Joy Seid: 2:20

Wow. And any other grandchildren besides Ashley's?

Connie Wright: 2:23

Yes. My son has a little girl and she is almost 2.

Carole Joy Seid: 2:27

Your cup is running over, isn't it?

Connie Wright: 2:31

It is. I didn't know how grand grandchildren are.

Carole Joy Seid: 2:34

That is so sweet. I I think I love that term. It's grand to be a grandmother. So, Connie, let's start with your story. Tell me about how you raised your children, what philosophy, and how the Lord directed your path.

Connie Wright: 2:46

Well, I guess, basically, we did what every family did. We never had heard of homeschooling. So Dave and I, when she turned unfortunately, I put her in school at 4 because she had a summer birthday. So she turned 5, like, those first couple weeks of school. I look back about that now and I'm horrified that she could do it. She that they went to public school until she was in 4th grade and my son did kindergarten at the same public school. And then my husband wanted to homeschool.

Carole Joy Seid: 3:17

Now where did that come from? Where did you even get the idea?

Connie Wright: 3:21

You know, I I don't even remember. Maybe people that he worked with had homeschooled. We did have a big group at our church. I think he wanted to travel more too.

Ashley Becker: 3:28

Right. He was pulling us out of school a lot.

Connie Wright: 3:32

Yeah. He was tired of the the dictation of the schedule and I was too. And I have to say, you know, I just was scared and I was disobedient to the Lord. I know that year. So then we decide we did private school. So we did private school for 1 year. So I tell everybody we've done it all, public, private, homeschool, and then we homeschooled. Year 2,001 is when we started. She was going into 5th grade, and my son was going into 2nd grade.

Carole Joy Seid: 3:59

Okay. And what was the philosophy that you started with?

Connie Wright: 4:02

We schooled at home. And that spring, I went to one of your conferences in Nashville. And I had never heard of you, but there was a group at our church, a big homeschooling group, and there was a bunch of moms going and I was invited to go. And I said, well, sure. And I have to say it changed my life because we were struggling. We were struggling that first fall at home. I was just telling her, I remember going out and we bought a desk for my son, which was a crazy idea. And I'm thinking he's gonna sit in his little school desk, and I literally did all the curriculum he was doing in 1st grade that he would continue on and it was a battle.

Carole Joy Seid: 4:48

Woah. And so it changed your life in what way?

Connie Wright: 4:51

A lot more relaxing. I think it brought us closer together as a family. My son did struggle a bit with reading and probably writing. Once I just ditched all that and did sing, spell, read, and write.

Ashley Becker: 5:07

Yeah. I'm gonna say it brought a lot of peace to our home. And shared memories through the books that we read.

Carole Joy Seid: 5:11

Oh, like, tell me some of those memories, Ashley.

Ashley Becker: 5:15

It was probably one of the first read alouds we did. One of the first was Heidi, and my little baby's name is Heidi. That's how much of an impression it made on me. I just loved it. I mean, who doesn't love Heidi?

Connie Wright: 5:22

Yeah. We read aloud. We never had time before to read aloud. We were just very, very busy. And it opened my world and it just gave brought so much peace to my heart to read such beautiful books. They I mean, I remember crying.

Carole Joy Seid: 5:41

How can you read Heidi and not cry? Oh, that's one of my all time favorite read alouds in the world because it's really the story of the prodigal son and redemption and the Lord welcoming us back to his family. I love that book. So, Connie, you it just your life changed, and you continued using the literature based approach, it sounds like. Tell me about that.

Connie Wright: 6:04

If it wasn't on the pink sheets, we didn't do it.

Ashley Becker: 6:08

The pink sheets were They're like gold. Like gold in our house.

Carole Joy Seid: 6:15

Yes. So then, Ashley, you, I guess, have decided to homeschool as well. Right?

Ashley Becker: 6:19

Yes. A lot of it is new for me because I did not start homeschooling until 5th grade, and I think it's a combination of being schooled for a while. It was a little bit of an adjustment. I liked workbooks because that's what I was used to. And with my children, it's all new to me. I haven't read a lot of these books, I never read. I was in school, so I never read them. And I think we got off track for a while. I think the workbook, the curriculum, it's very tempting because it's it's an immediate satisfaction of checking something off your list, having it done, and really having the illusion of having mastered something, which we haven't. But with books, it's not that instant gratification other than that they're just really wonderful to read. But it's not that instant gratification of I can check this off my list now. We've mastered this subject or we've mastered this concept. We never have come back to it again. But what you get with books is so much more since we've put away the curriculum, and I packed it up after talking to you. I packed it up and it is out since we put it away. What you get with books and what I had with books growing up after we started homeschooling, your hearts are shaped, your character is shaped. And there isn't an illusion sort of of mastery. These are things that you're gonna be learning your whole life. I mean, I'm still contemplating, you know, *The Oxcart Man* and *The Tailor of Gloucester* and all these great books. You never get to the bottom of it. It's never ending, and that's what education is. So that's one thing, I mean, that I love about your philosophy, and I think why it can give you so much peace, not just because you're not spinning your wheels stressed out trying to check through a million things, but it's just it's what education actually is. You know, it's not just check it, move on, check this, move on. It's having these beautiful ideas in your heart and in your mind forever.

Carole Joy Seid: 8:21

Oh, Ashley. Well, when we did our appointment, Connie, I kept saying, I've gotta interview you guys on this podcast because I'm starting to see a second generation person who has been educated like this and now educating their own children. And that's really the proof of the pudding. Don't you think?

Connie Wright: 8:40

Yes. I do. And just hearing her, I could almost cry because that's what our prayer for our children was their hearts. We wanted their hearts. We didn't care if they were the most successful people. Of course, they have all grown up and, you know, doing their thing and have succeeded because I think that's a big fear people have. Homeschooling and sometimes especially not doing the box curriculum is they're like, well, you know, what about the other kids in school? They're doing this, or they're doing that. And it was hard. It is hard to not, you know, compare and stuff, but you just have to do your own thing. And I think the Lord's gonna lead you, and he's gonna give you that peace. And I think their hearts are the most valuable thing that we can nurture and just pray about and raise them up.

Carole Joy Seid: 9:25

First things first and then second things will follow along. And they would.

Connie Wright: 9:28

And my son, he he said doctor Moore. I mean, I just gave up. I thought we're pushing him and, you know, he's gone on to be successful and he pretty much played outside, dug in the dirt, and played with Legos. Wow. Until, you know, wasn't an early reader. He read late, and he just did a fantastic he hadn't had any problems.

Carole Joy Seid: 9:51

So Incredible. I mean, that takes incredible concentration and intelligence, and he can do all that. And if he'd been in school, what would been the letters after his name if he'd been in school?

Connie Wright: 10:02

Probably not paying attention. I'm assuming there would have been a lot of push to medicate him Yeah. And just things like that. Yeah. So yeah. Or special tutoring. We gotta have him tutored because he's not testing, you know, maybe at this. But it is. It's a scary thing. I was scared some days thinking, oh my goodness. We did nothing. He played with Legos all day. His favorite day was cleaning day. I told her that and she said, show you real quick. And he's a wonderful husband and father, and I I'm hoping I've already I gave my daughter-in-law, gifted her, let the little children come. She loves it.

Carole Joy Seid: 10:40

So you gave her the *Let the Little Children Come* audio seminar on parenting? I did. Well done, grandma. Yes. And I'm always telling people, oh, you homeschool.

Connie Wright: 10:47

Well, this is what you need to do.

Carole Joy Seid: 10:51

So, Connie, looking at this next generation of home schoolers that I think are doing things very, very differently than what doctor Moore taught, what would you say to them now as a sage in the homeschool movement? Because that's what you are.

Connie Wright: 11:06

I don't know. I guess I'd go back to the the it's their hearts that you want and just to bring beauty into their world because I feel like the enemy is just creeping more and more and more into these children's innocent lives. And the more you can shut that out, the better off your children are gonna be, your family is going to be, and just being obedient, obedient to the Lord.

Carole Joy Seid: 11:29

How would social media have changed your life in not such a great way? And Ashley's nodding here too. So both of you, both your generations perspectives.

Connie Wright: 11:40

Yes. You know, I am so glad my kids were kind of on the upper end when it came out, and I think that they were at the maturity level that they could have one at that point, you know, college. Yeah. You know, I'm saying like that. I'd say get off of it. I don't even like it. I've tried it. I kinda go, you know, back and forth because I do feel like, well, just to keep up with people sometimes, but I would say keep your kids away from it.

Carole Joy Seid: 12:06

Yeah. No. I couldn't agree more. How would it have affected you as a mom homeschooling? Being on social media?

Connie Wright: 12:14

Oh, I would have probably been worried. They probably would have given me anxiety comparing myself cause it is, you are going against the world. The world's telling you to do this, put your kids in school all day, this is what they have to do and sitting at home and reading great books, what a beautiful thing, but it's not what the world is telling you to do. It is one of those things you have to step out, have the faith.

Carole Joy Seid: 12:40

Yes. And, Ashley, how would you address your peers who are maybe being influenced by influencers? And tell me your advice as a second generation of this philosophy.

Ashley Becker: 12:52

Unfollow. If you are on somebody's page and they're making you feel like you're behind or you're just feeling distracted from what your goal is, unfollow or get off of it completely because there there is a lot of pressure whether it's there's meant to be or

not. You know, I know a lot of these accounts, they're not trying to pressure you, but you can't help but compare. What is invoked now in the homeschool world is not. Late is better than early. So you're gonna be seeing a whole lot of workbooks and curriculum. And, you know, when we get a curriculum catalog in the mail, it just goes in the trash because I'm tempted. I'm the oldest daughter personality. I'm tempted. I like checking things. You know? So know what you can handle. Know yourself. But, yeah, with this story that you had shared with me about Danny Thomas and just just keeping your blinders on. But, Danny Thomas told his daughter who was a rising actress, I believe, at the time, that she was not the look that was popular at the time. You know, blonde hair, blue eyes. And she was beautiful, but had her own look, and he told her to run her own race. He got her the blinders that horses wear. Is that right?

Carole Joy Seid: 14:07

Had them delivered to her house in a great big box, horse blinders from a race horse. The note said, "Honey, run your own race. Love Daddy."

Ashley Becker: 14:17

Yes. And which is exactly what I needed to hear, what you told me. Run your own race because there is a lot of pressure. Even if you're not on social media, you know, just being at the park with other homeschool moms and hearing what they're doing with their kids, and it's probably a lot of curriculum, it can feel like a lot of pressure.

Carole Joy Seid: 14:33

Yes. But in the end, what is the fruit of this methodology, would you say, Connie? What when when your kids finish high school using this approach, what do you see in your children that the busy work might have not accomplished? I think they're self learners.

Connie Wright: 14:52

I think that they have the drive to they wanna know something. They're gonna they know how to go and find it. I think that's a big thing. Of course, I'm gonna go back to their hearts. I think their hearts are important and I think we saved a lot of that from not putting them in traditional school. And our family relationships.

Ashley Becker: 15:10

Yeah, our family relationship.

Carole Joy Seid: 15:14

Tell us about that. You're really close.

Ashley Becker: 15:17

When you read books together and you discuss everything under the sun together And you have lots of time, you have peace in your home. Our home was peaceful. Yes. Our

home was very peaceful. It was. You actually have time to make memories together, and that would be the shift. I think when we started homeschooling, we actually had time.

Connie Wright: 15:39

And it happened organically. I'm not saying that to put pressure, you know, like, you have to make memories because we were always together.

Carole Joy Seid: 15:43

A lot of homeschool families, I think, are on a trajectory where they're being distracted from what's really valuable and eternally valuable. As you keep bringing up, Connie, their spiritual development, their heart, that's the key. Get that right first, and the other things will fall into play. So as Jesus said, seek first the kingdom of God. You know, some families, it's amazing to me, but some families will tell me, Carol, we are so busy. We don't have time to read to our children. What would be your response to that?

Connie Wright: 16:13

Well, I'm you have something, and if you looked at your daily schedule, you could give up something to read. And what a wonderful thing you're missing out on because like I said, your pink sheets just opened up my world. Yeah. *The Hawk and the Dove*, Elizabeth Goudge.

Carole Joy Seid: 16:31

And in the original in the original sheets, Ashley, all the sheets were pink. Where now, we have purple and pink and buff and blue and green and yellow. Because in the seminar, we realized people were trying to juggle all these sheets that were all one color, so then we made lover books blue and curriculum green or whatever. I can't remember well, but they're all color coded. So when I say, please pick up your green sheet now, we're gonna talk about curriculum. It makes it easier in the seminars. You are such a veteran that you were in the old days when they were all pink. And we did that so that people wouldn't lose them with the laundry list because pink really stood out in your house and you wouldn't throw them out.

Ashley Becker: 17:12

We're so thankful for how long you've been doing this ministry. This is so needed with these amazing books and with the, you know, a philosophy that allows them to be kids and allows them to have peaceful home life.

Carole Joy Seid: 17:27

You're like my poster children. I'm just when I was consulting with Ashley and she was talking about you, kinda I'm like, okay. I've got it. I've got to get together with your

mom. And I told her, I really hope that you'll come to Nashville and with and meet your kiddos because I'd really like you to be on our panel at the end of the day, Connie.

Connie Wright: 17:45

I would love to come to the seminar. I also when my her and Josiah went, I said, you're going to love her.

Ashley Becker: 17:49

By the way, yes, my husband went because he's wonderful, he's supportive, but, I mean, it wasn't high on his to do list. He wasn't excited to be there. He just fell in love when you started quoting Piaget and all the all things he learned in med school, and he's like, this is amazing. By the time the conference ended, I bent down to pick up my purse. He was up in line ready to talk to you.

Carole Joy Seid: 18:15

And they come with you for free, and so there's no reason not to bring them. And your teenagers come with you for free because we want the whole family to have the same vision. It's not just mom's vision. Dad owns it. The kids own their own education. Like you said, Connie, they're self motivated. They know how to teach themselves what they need to know. Yeah. This I mean, after 35 years plus of teaching this method and sitting under Dr. Moore all those years before, I can say this method works. And I've never had one person sit write me and say, "Carole, you ruined our children. This method is a disaster. They're working at the car wash now." Not one person, but we've had Rhodes Scholars and full rides at Cornell and Pepperdine and Stanford and, you know, all these different places because this makes what you just said, Connie, lifelong learners. It doesn't stop on commencement day, but it commences on commencement day. That's what the word means. Your education begins when you graduate. Just keeps going. I am so thrilled. I I love you girls. I love you. Connie, if you would to pray for the young families that are listening. Would you mind doing that? Thank you.

Connie Wright: 19:30

Lord, I just lift up anyone that's listening to this podcast right now. Lord, the world is after them, that it's after the hearts of their children. Lord, I just ask that you give them that peace beyond all understanding and that they will just take a leap of faith and know that their work is not gonna return void to them because you promised that, Lord, that when we are faithful, you were with us and you give us the strength to endure. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Carole Joy Seid: 19:59

Amen. You are making my year. You I I feel such joy.

Ashley Becker: 20:07

Well, you have made our year. My kids are already happier.

Carole Joy Seid: 20:10

Well, God bless you. I loved spending time with you both.

Ashley Becker: 20:37

Thank you for having us. You changed our lives, honestly. So thank you for having us.

Rachel Winchester: 20:42

Thank you for joining us this week on the Homeschool Made Simple podcast. I'm Rachel Winchester. If you wanna learn more about the Homeschool Made Simple approach Connie and Ashley talked about, we have a free ebook for you. When you visit our website, [homeschool made simple dot net](http://homeschoolmade-simple.com), and click the start here button, we'll send you our free ebook about the 5 essential parts of a great education. You can also find the link in the show notes. Be sure to join us next time as we help you homeschool simply, inexpensively, and enjoyably. Remember, Jesus' commandments are not burdensome. What He calls you to do, He will enable you to do. Blessings.