

Homeschooling For the Win! with the Barba Family

Episode 242

Rachel Winchester [00:00:00]:

Have you ever said, I just wish I could talk to someone who has done this method. Does it really work? Well, today we have a treat for you. In this episode, we are returning to our conversation with a family who uses this method and has seen the fruit of it with their own family. You're listening to the Homeschool Made Simple podcast. This is a podcast to help you homeschool simply, inexpensively, and enjoyably. Carole Joy Seid has been helping families homeschool for several decades now, and this is one of the families who have attended our seminars and consulted with Carole over the years. We know the second part of our conversation will encourage you.

Carole Joy Seid [00:00:37]:

So, Arnold, you are you dean at the law school now at Pepperdine. Is that correct?

Arnold Barba [00:00:45]:

2 years ago, I was, invited to serve as the chief of staff to the dean of the law school here at Pepperdine Crusoe Law, and I'm an associate dean of professional development. So one of the hats that I wear, aside from supporting the leadership of the dean, is, I teach a class to all the incoming students, about a 190 of them. I address them on topics of professionalism, lawyers as fiduciary, lawyers as negotiators, lawyers as peacemakers. We talk about big ticket items in my class to get them thinking about the kind of person they need to become that their future clients need them to be as opposed to just transactionally seeking out, the opportunities that get them ahead.

Carole Joy Seid [00:01:32]:

Yes. And both of you are such mentors to so many people. I do appointments with people, and inevitably, they say, well, we we're friends with Claudia and Arnold. I'm like, oh, say no more. So, Claudia, you are also an attorney and tell us about what you do.

Claudia Barba [00:01:51]:

God has really blessed me after having been home with the girls. I am a trust and estates attorney. I came back out or started, you know, kind of weaning myself off of homeschooling and into back into the practice to an area of the law that I had not practiced in before, and it was an area of the law that I didn't think I would ever be practicing in. What I knew is that I didn't want to go back to business litigation, which is what I did before, having kids. And just like the Lord to give us something that we can't even imagine how good it's going to be. And so I am a partner at my firm now and I just absolutely love what I do. I get to sit across from family, family members that, you know, want to make sure that they have their estate plan in order, and I get to talk to them about their objectives and how to do that.

My faith, comes out. I always, you know, wear my faith on my sleeve. And so if they are a believer, they absolutely pick up on it and, you know, we dive right into that. And if they're not a believer, it just kinda goes right past them. They just like me, but they don't know why. But I feel so blessed, and it's a joy. It's a joy what I do, and it's amazing to for me to just see how the Lord has blessed the years after homeschooling and being with the girls.

Carole Joy Seid [00:03:39]:

Yes. And it is a sacrifice and a laying down of our rights very often, also of giving up a second income living in Southern California. Let's face it. That was that was a act of faith to do that in those homeschool years. But I always encourage moms to say to them, look at you have the rest of your life to work. And when you when you graduate these children and hear the Lord say, well done, good and faithful servant, servant, you can just dive into a career and work until you're a 100 years old if you want to. So you're you're really modeling that. You're not just sitting home crocheting Afghans, but you've you've jumped into a whole another realm of life.

Carole Joy Seid [00:04:22]:

And it it it's really exciting to me. Let's turn a corner. And, Natalia, when she was on the podcast, I read the adorable note that she wrote to me on her graduation. Did you guys read it before she mailed it to me? It was adorable. And, and she talked about nature and and the changes that were made in nature and the books they read. So tell me about some of the changes in your lives and some of your best memories of of homeschooling that that's going on.

Claudia Barba [00:04:55]:

I think in the in the earlier years, right, I'm thinking before high school. So in the elementary years and into the early junior high years, I just loved the structure and I'm

putting structure in air quotes, but the structure that you provide, you know, when you lay out what a typical day should look like, and and it is in air quotes because it it's not the structure of a school, right, the rigid structure, but it's it's a rhythm, you know, that, that just glorifies the Lord. And And one of the most delightful, you know, memories is just starting off the day at the breakfast table, eating breakfast that we learn how to make from you healthy, you know, to sustain our body, starting with, you know, our Bible time and scripture time and moving on throughout the day, but eventually knowing that we would get out because Carole was forcing us out at least, you know, 3 times a week. And, you know, just just that's a memory. Right? Those are memories that I have. That doesn't mean that in the moment, it was all, you know, melodies and and birds chirping, you know, around us as we went as we went through our day. But it's just so wonderful to be able to think back and have those memories, right, where I go, wow. I would've never done that but for, you know, the encouragement and the wisdom that Carol would share as to why this is important in a child's life.

Carole Joy Seid [00:06:44]:

So you were doing nature walks, which was the 3 times a week part. Right?

Claudia Barba [00:06:48]:

The 3 times a week part.

Carole Joy Seid [00:06:51]:

And then hopefully, it grew. But Natalia talked about being afraid she was gonna be stung by a bug or or I don't know. Yeah. She wasn't exactly a mountain woman starting in this journey. Right?

Claudia Barba [00:07:01]:

No. She she wasn't. And you know what's really funny? I in her senior year at Biola, so this was this happened she just loved it. Yes. She absolutely loved her hiking class. She learned so much in that class, and she did things that even I wouldn't do.

Carole Joy Seid [00:07:34]:

Wow. Well and and but you know what? She was not a novice because she'd been doing nature stuff with you guys really all through her school years. And so she wasn't she wasn't unknown to the nature world, but she got stretched a little bit more. Yeah. If she'd been a little bit younger, she would have gone to Coldwater, but she missed that window, you know, in terms of her school age years that we started working with Coldwater. And I would have forced her to go there, and then I really would have had the note when she graduated. So tell me about reading out loud, Arnold. You did some of that once or twice when the girls were growing up.

Carole Joy Seid [00:08:16]:
I'm being facetious. Tell me about that.

Claudia Barba [00:08:19]:
More gets this or twice.

Carole Joy Seid [00:08:21]:
Yes. Yeah.

Arnold Barba [00:08:22]:
I was at a, an important meeting on Saturday, sitting with, some faculty members and some law students, and the topic of of homeschooling came up because Jesse Faye was sitting next to me of your friend and I think a new client of yours now, Carole. And she was talking about building a library and how it's challenging to, find good books. And, so the topic of what is a good book came up and what our favorite books are, and the question was posed to me, so what's your favorite book? And I said, the gospel of John, and they said, well, besides that. Yeah. And I said, well, my favorite book is every book that I read to my children. Oh. And then I started listening in front of them. Pilgrim's Progress, I think, 2 or 3 times.

Arnold Barba [00:09:12]:
Amazing. Great Expectations was sweet. To this day, we have inside jokes, right, where they ask me for a fever, and I say, well, I must say yes by necessary sequence. Right? Which is the Dickens way of saying, yeah, I'm morally obligated to do that. Right?

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:31]:
Yeah. Right.

Arnold Barba [00:09:33]:
The Chronicles of Narnia, just the profound literature by CS Lewis there. And a close second are the books that I heard Claudia read, like Little House in the Big Woods. Right? And I still remember washing dishes while Claudia's reading to them the accounts of Laura taking a very cold horse buggy ride with Almanzo, to work.

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:58]:
Yes. Was oh, that was when she was teaching school. But I love the one where the horse was so wild that he couldn't make the horse stop and she had to jump in the buggy on their dates without without the buggy stopping. Oh, those books are so fabulous.

Arnold Barba [00:10:14]:

So we would do that at night after dinner Yes. Before bedtime. And the nice thing about that is that it made it a point of primacy for time with me and time with with creativity, and it made for a great transition to prayer time. When I tuck them in.

Carole Joy Seid [00:10:35]:

Yes.

Arnold Barba [00:10:36]:

So we would pray together. Yeah. I'd ask if they had any questions about the Lord, and we would talk about that, and then I'd bless them.

Carole Joy Seid [00:10:45]:

Oh. What are your takeaways from homeschooling that you might exhort someone in if they were considering homeschooling? Why homeschool? I guess that's a question. I'm Susie McGillicuddy. I'm coming to tea with you, Claudia, and and I'm thinking about homeschooling. Why should I?

Claudia Barba [00:11:06]:

One of the beautiful fruit that I see, you know, in our girls is their trust in us. They really look to us as, not just their parents, right, which will always be the case, but as they've gotten older, as their sister and brother in Christ. You know, we are in that time period of their lives where they're transitioning. Right? They spent way more time outside of the house than they do with us. And when I look back, homeschooling can you achieve it without homeschooling? Absolutely. I'm not saying that you can't. Homeschooling, I think, really provides that avenue, that foundation where you just spend so much time with each other and you do life together, whether it's eating together, learning together, playing together. It is just a part of your life that you do together, and it solidifies.

It gives them, you know, greater opportunity to see you and examine you as the human being that you are doing life. And it shows them, you know, how to do life. You're modeling for your children how to do life. I think that that creates that opportunity for your children to learn to trust you, not only when they're little and they depend on you for food and shelter, but as they get older, you know, and, you know, just need advice in different areas of their lives. So for me, homeschooling, that's what I look back and I see. That was another foundational block that the Lord used to solidify our relationship to our children.

Carole Joy Seid [00:13:08]:

Talk, Arnold, about working with your children.

Arnold Barba [00:13:12]:

I'll respond to that by enveloping my response into your prior question too, taking what Claudia said. Yes. I'm gonna use the metaphor of the tree of life. Homeschooling your children is an embodiment of the tree of life. What I mean by that is, you need to do the basics well, so you you need to surrender to God and follow his precepts as a parent, not imposing the rules of a household for your own comfort and convenience to, monitor or adjust outward behavior, but rather shepherding a child's heart. Rooting them and grounding them in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because the quickening of their soul is, the first objective of a parent Yes. Bringing them to Christ, shepherding their heart to Christ

And that's that's sowing the deep root work Yeah. In the gospel of Christ, and and then by, affirmatively presenting the glory of Christ through every aspect of life, including homeschooling, then you build a pallet. You kind of you draw the root to drink deeply from the brook, and the brook is the word of God and classical literature that work hand in glove. And from drinking from that brook, they develop a love for learning. And once that takes flight, they grow outwardly. The tree grows up and the limbs spread out, and there's no limit to how far those limbs will grow when that root structure in Christ is broad and deep. And they become a blessing to other people that the shade of the tree of life is an ecosystem that is without end.

So that's that's basically why homeschooling and working with your children in homeschooling is very much like gardening.

Carole Joy Seid [00:15:15]:

Yes. And gardening takes a lot of work and a lot of patience.

Arnold Barba [00:15:19]:

That's right. And and it's not for the sake of getting something done, but rather for the care and nurture of the child that is, called by God to worship at the Son.

Carole Joy Seid [00:15:30]:

Amen. Amen. So let's, just touch on work and and the power of work to shape your children's character. What was your experience with that as a family?

Arnold Barba [00:15:43]:

Well, as you say, there's a 3 legged stool to the homeschooling experience. There's the academics, there's service, and there's work. And work is, an opportunity for our children to image God because he worked, and to contribute to the team that is the BARBA clan. And so starting very early on, our children, replaced their mother and I in terms of the the caretakers of the home. They made our bed. We picked up our trash. They washed the dishes. They put them away. Claudia worked herself out of a job very early on.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:31]:

Claudia, would you have raised your children excuse me for interrupting, Arnold, but I'm just curious. Would you have raised your children in that manner naturally?

Claudia Barba [00:16:40]:

No. Not at all. I mean, in fact, I grew up in, in a home where my mom did everything. And, well, you know, she did it because she thought that was an expression of love. You know, she wasn't doing it for any other reason than to love on me, but she didn't understand, you know, what the consequences of that would be. Right? So it takes, it takes, I'm just so thankful that the Lord put people in my path to show me how to do things differently for our girls.

And they really value work because of that. And there's always the why, Right? Why is it that we value work? And it's something that, you know, Arnold touched on. Well, of course, because it glorifies the Lord ultimately. Right? That is why they value work. But practically speaking, in our home, it's because that's the way that they contribute, right, in their younger years to Team Barba, like Arnold said. You know, you're not able to go out and earn a living. That's daddy's job right now. But here are the things that you're able to do to contribute to the team.

And it was beautiful to see. In fact, I don't know if you remember that after dropping off, Sophia and Gabriela, which the last one that we dropped off, their freshman year at college, Arnold and I went to go get some ice cream, and we we texted you. And we're like, well Right now. What do we do now? We have no children in our home, and and who's gonna do everything? I needed some onboarding, you know, from the girls because I have forgotten how to do laundry because it has been years since I have done laundry. And I asked you, I mean, like, what what do we do now? Do we have more kids? So and, you know, here's the other thing. Natalia has graduated and, you know, they they go away, right, for these years and and they they kind they're kind of just spending for themselves.

They're not really serving others. They're not doing other people's laundry. Right? They're kind of just doing their own and washing others. They're not doing other people's laundry. Right? They're kind of just doing their own and washing their own dishes. You know, of course, there's ministry opportunities and serving opportunities in other ways. But she comes back home and the same for Sophia and Gabriela. And the first thing is, how can I help?

What can I do for you? Let let me do the the dishes tonight. You know, it's like they're just how can I contribute to our family? That's just what they do. It's it blows me away. I'm like, I don't take any credit for this.

Carole Joy Seid [00:19:23]:

Beautiful. And you will have people fighting over them, and you probably already do for them to work for them. Because when you train a child to work and they that is part of their makeup and their being, everyone wants a piece of your child. And it's they're it's gonna just bless them for the rest of their lives, what you've accomplished. Arnold, do you wanna add to this?

Arnold Barba [00:19:48]:

Yeah. Without work, it there's a distorted world view for the child. They're really the center of the universe, and it's about being served and consuming what their little appetite wants in the moment, and that makes for a monster when they grow up. That's a little hyperbolic, but, you know, not really. Yeah. And work is a way to to keep one centered on on thinking more than just self, and it's a way that we help detox our daughters when they come home from their dorm life where everybody around them is just consuming all the time.

Carole Joy Seid [00:20:25]:

Yes. Yeah. Well, would you guys like to pray? 1 of you is to pray for the our families? I think Arnold, you know, I always like daddies to pray. So can I can I ask you to do that? Sure. Thank you.

Arnold Barba [00:20:41]:

My my pleasure. Heavenly father, you are high and exalted. Your glory fills the heavens and the earth. But you look down, father. You didn't stay in heaven. You look down upon the earth, and you saw the brokenness, the chaos, the darkness, and you didn't forget the covenant, the promise that you made to Abraham that a seed would come and bless the nations. And you sent your son. He became man and dwelt amongst men, And he lived a perfect life, and he died an atoning death, and you raised him on the 3rd day.

Arnold Barba [00:21:23]:

He ascended it and now is seated at your right hand. The kingdom of God is now, and our king is reigning. There's a full consummation yet to come, but even now, we await that with hope and expectation. And you look upon us now, and you say, image Christ. Build the kingdom one soul at a time. We thank you for that charge, that calling. We thank you for the identity you've given us in Christ, and we ask for the grace that we need to pass that message along to our children at the dinner table, at the breakfast nook, the coming and going, and especially in homeschooling them. Grant the grace that fathers and mothers need to develop relationships with their children so that they have the frame for a homeschooling environment, And teach them to love, to learn, and together, to love to learn about Christ.

Grant fathers the wisdom and the courage to die to self and put mothers and children first before their own appetites so that in the end, they stand before the living god, shoulder to shoulder with their wives and their children to receive the crown of life. Let that be their aim as they suffer well, the sacrifices they must make. They encourage their wives when they're discouraged, and they encourage their children to model after himself as he models Christ, Jesus Christ. In his name, we pray. Amen.

Carole Joy Seid [00:23:17]:

Amen. It is a privilege and an honor to do life with you all, and I'm so grateful for you both.