

What I've Learned

I wonder—what *have* I learned from my parents, just by watching them? And what is the one trait I have learned that is most valuable? As I consider all the different possibilities, one characteristic stands out most prominently—perseverance.

Let's say that it is two or three in the morning and I have to get out of bed to fetch a glass of water. While doing so, I'm always certain to see Dad sitting in front of the computer typing doggedly away. He's been working on novels and short stories for years, perhaps even a decade—and yet no one has ever bothered to publish them. Sometimes it takes years for a publisher to write some poor author a rejection letter, and sometimes it only takes a few months. Yet despite the frequent disappointments, Dad never stops writing and never stops sending his stories out. And we never stop praying. Soon, I'm certain that one of those publishers will write him back—only that time it won't be a rejection letter he receives.

My mother has her own story to tell of the days when she first came down with rheumatoid arthritis. I can remember a time before that—when she would play freeze-tag with her three kids in the spacious backyard, her long, dark hair streaming behind her. That suddenly ended, and she began spending weeks in bed. Rheumatoid arthritis is a painful disease and, the doctors said, incurable. But Mother prayed that her disease would go away, as did we all. She never stopped believing that God would heal her. Then, one day, she was able to walk around again. Gradually the arthritis healed until there was only a slight hint of the pain Mother endured. Even now, though the arthritis has not left

her completely, the doctors would be amazed at how much better she is now than she was when she went to see them.

Both of my parents contribute greatly to their children's education. Mother teaches three languages, history, science, grammar, and gives us reading assignments, while Dad handles the mathematics. Looking back on past homeschooling sessions, I realize how painstakingly long it takes me to learn something, and yet how diligently Mother and Dad teach that one thing until I know it by heart!

Sometimes I ponder as to how they maintain such fantastic resolution. Then I think of another example of perseverance—how every morning my parents steadfastly pray, both by themselves and with their children. This is a wonder all in itself—that every day, no matter how they feel, they find some time to worship God. And then the fact that they are so diligent doesn't surprise me anymore. They continue teaching, writing, and praying to be healed because of one thing alone. They trust in God.

I am fortunate to have such determined parents, and some day I'll make them proud of what they taught me. How do I know I'll do this? Because they've taught me to never give up.