

## Our Daughter's First Cycle

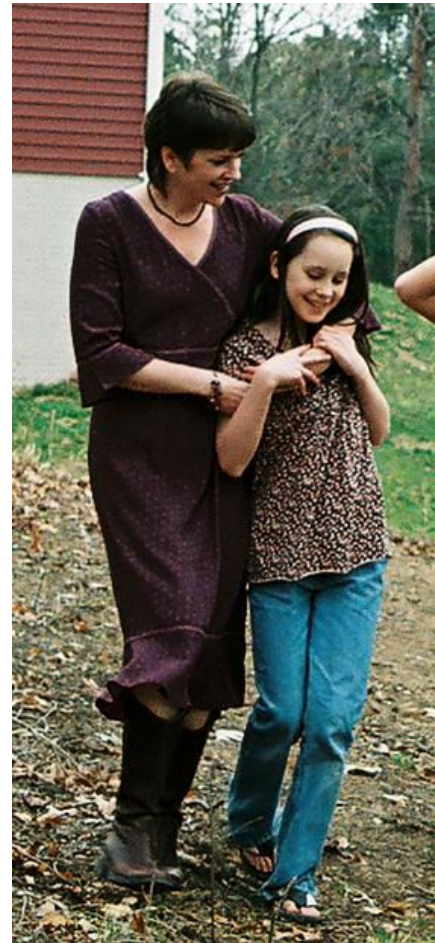
Giving pregnancy talks and teaching on the blessings of children has led to another area of women's lives to be seen as blessings, not burdens. Mothers are asking me, "My daughter is beginning to have signs of maturity and what shall I do?" This is common for Christian women, as well as non-believing women. They are unsure how to teach their daughters about their first cycle, let alone how to keep a focus on Christ-centeredness for this season.

All of our cycles were created by God for a reason and they were created good. He did not make a mistake when he gave us menstruation once a month (on average) beginning as early as 8 years old in today's society. What are some of the reasons for earlier periods? Well, that would be a whole article on its own! Many factors and variables are present there including hormones in our foods and environment as well as the steroids pre-mature babies get, and the list goes on. The fact is, some girls can begin their menstruation as early as 8 years of age... and that can be very shocking for mothers who didn't start in "their day" until they were on average about 12 years of age. What do we do about this?

Well, for one, we do not ignore it and pray it goes away. We seek out biblically sound and Christ-centered information, if we can, to teach our daughters that like the pregnancy and maternity stage (as well as menopause) it is not a curse or an illness or something that needs to be fixed! The fear surrounding their first cycle is due to our culture and what is acceptable according to the mainstream society. God says in Romans 12:2, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of you mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

What can we do as mothers? We can teach them from a young age, when menarche begins (up to two years before their menstruation flow) that it is a God-given cycle made for His purpose. This is a beautiful opportunity to show how God has made us so intricately and how we truly are wonderfully and fearfully made in His eyes. I love the scripture in Job 10:8 that states, "Your hands have made me and fashioned me, and intricate unity."

My own daughter, Emilyne (shown in this photo with me) was nearing the age of 11 when I started the ***Maidens by His Design*** curriculum. I knew I wanted her to be equipped to understand what was happening to her body before her actual menstruation flow began. She now has knowledge that has enabled her to see God's design for her and how she was created. She also has a trust in me and will prayerfully come to me with any questions she has concerning her cycle. She now sees her cycle as something that has meaning in God's eyes. That is why it is exciting to me to see other mothers acknowledge the importance of teaching this to their daughters as well.



In teaching my new curriculum, *Maidens by His Design*, in workshops all over Virginia last year to mother/daughter teams, I found that most of the moms enjoyed the class as much as the daughters because they learned so much themselves. They were not taught the information and in most cases, they were left to read the inserts in the box if they wanted information pertaining to their first cycle. It blesses me so to see the moms love the course and be grateful for the content to teach their daughters.

A lot of mothers are well meaning and really want their daughters to learn but they are unsure how to teach it without going into the fertility and actual act that causes fertility. My course does not mention anything about male physical parts or the actual act that would create a pregnancy. I discuss the cycle in its phases and what happens if fertilization doesn't happen, which is most of their cycling lives. Then I steer them to their mother for conversations on what does the word "fertilization" mean and what lies beyond that definition that their mother may want to explain more fully.

The course I created is for mothers to have an avenue to point their daughters to God's beautiful design for them. It is to keep them focused on God's grace and mercy and loving care to them, even during their cycles. It is to teach that that we do not have to have a spirit of fear surrounding this cycle in our lives, but instead it is an opportunity to learn about God's goodness. Can you see and imagine the effect



this will have on pregnancy and menopause as well? All cycles will be viewed as a normal life process that we can be grateful for. Let us not dread our God-given cycles or try to get rid of them, but instead we, as Christians, can embrace them by seeing God's loving kindnesses to us through the actual design of them.

Our menstruation, in particular, has many positive aspects that get forgotten in the secular worldview of menstruation. For instance, even though it involves a blood and cell mixture, it is a cleansing process. Do we teach our daughters this? It is used to cleanse our bodies each month, how incredible is that!? Our bodies were meant to shed a lining if we are not pregnant! Why would we want to get rid of that awesome design and process all in the name of convenience?

The book, *Beautiful Girlhood* (which a lot of you have probably had the pleasure of reading) by Mabel Hale says, "Girlhood is the opening flower of womanhood. It has charms all its own. The wonderful change from the child to the woman, the marvelous blossoming of young, healthy girlhood, will ever be God's great miracle in life's garden."

Please, if you would like more information on my curriculum or resources for young ladies and mothers, visit the website at [www.blessingGodsway.com](http://www.blessingGodsway.com). I welcome you to explore the tools I have created to keep God's design for women as something to be grateful for. I simply want to teach that our cycles are blessings to us, God's way!

Doran Richards, wife to Daniel for 15 years and mother to Joshua (14), Emilyne (12), Isaac (8), Elizabeth (6), Ezra (2). Founder of Blessing God's Way – a resource for women and daughters.