**Children Won’t Wait**

(by Helen M. Young)

There is a time to anticipate the baby’s coming,

a time to consult a doctor;

A time to plan a diet and exercise,

a time to gather a layette.

There is a time to wonder at the ways of God,

knowing this is the destiny for which I was crafted;

A time to dream of what this child may become,

A time to pray that God will teach me how to train this child which I bear.

A time to prepare myself that I might nurture his soul.

But soon there comes the time for birth,

**For babies won’t wait.**

There is a time for night feedings, and colic and formulas.

There is a time for rocking and a time for walking the floor,

A time for patience and self-sacrifice,

A time to show him that his new world is a world of love and goodness and dependability.

There is a time to ponder what he is – not a pet or a toy, but a person, an individual – a soul made in God’s own image.

There is a time to consider my stewardship. I cannot possess him.

He is not mine. I have been chosen to care for him, to nurture him, and to answer to God.

I resolve to do my best for him,

**For babies won’t wait.**

There is a time to hold him close and tell him the sweetest story ever told;

A time to show him God in earth and sky and flower, to teach him to wonder and reverence.

There is a time to leave the dishes, to swing him in the park,

To run a race, to draw a picture, to catch a butterfly, to give him happy comradeship.

There is a time to point the way, to teach his infant lips to pray,

To teach his heart to love God’s word, to love God’s way.

**For children won’t wait.**

There is a time to sing instead of grumble, to smile instead of frown,

To kiss away the tears and laugh at broken dishes.

A time to share with him my best in attitudes – a love of life, a love of God, a love of family.

There is a time to answer his questions, all his questions,

Because there may come a time when he will not want my answers.

There is a time to teach him so patiently to obey, to put his toys away.

There is a time to teach him the beauty of duty, the habit of Bible study, the joy of worship at home, the peace of prayer.

**For children won’t wait.**

There is a time to watch him bravely go to school, to miss him underfoot,

And to know that other minds have his attention, but that I will be there to answer his call when he comes home and listen eagerly to the story of his day.

There is a time to teach him independence, responsibility, self-reliance,

To be firm but friendly, to discipline with love,

For soon, so soon, there will be a time to let him go, the apron strings untied,

**For children won’t wait.**

There is a time to treasure every fleeting minute of his childhood.

Just eighteen precious years to inspire and train him.

I will not exchange this birthright for a mess of pottage called social position, or business or professional reputation, or a paycheck.

An hour of correction now may save years of heartache tomorrow.

The house will wait, the dishes will wait, the new room can wait,

**But children won’t wait.**

There will be a time when there is no slamming of doors, no toys on the stairs, no childhood quarrels, no fingerprints on the wallpaper.

Then may I look back with joy and not regret. There will be a time to concentrate on serving outside my home:

On visiting the sick, the bereaved, the discouraged, the untaught;

To give myself to the “least of these.”

There will be a time to look back and know that these years of motherhood were not wasted.

I pray there will be a time to see him an upright and honest man, loving God and serving all.

God give me the wisdom to see that today is my day with my children,

That there is no unimportant moment in their lives.

May I know that no other career is so precious,

No other work so rewarding,

No other task so urgent.

May I not defer it or neglect it,

But by Thy Spirit accept it gladly and joyously,

And by that grace realize

That the time is short and my time is now –

**For children won’t wait!**