

Women's Life



January 2004

The Parable of the Resentful Host

One day a man, reading Romans 12, saw that he was called to practice hospitality. Wanting to be obedient to the Scriptures, he decided to have a dinner party. First he decided to make a guest list. Whom would he invite?

The Host considered all of his friends, acquaintances, and relations. Did he owe anyone an invitation? Ah, yes. There were two friends who'd entertained him in the past year, that'd he'd never repaid.

Was there anyone that it would be good for him to invite? Ah, yes. There was a wealthy acquaintance, with whom it would be good to have a closer tie.

Was there anyone that it might be charitable to invite? Ah, yes. There was that visiting missionary. He might also add a spiritual flavor that might improve the company!

The Host wrote out his invitations, to each of his intended guests. The first two friends wrote back that they could not attend; they were giving parties themselves. The missionary called and asked if he could bring two guests from a foreign land. The wealthy acquaintance simply never responded.

The Host, seeing that he had done this great thing of offering hospitality as commanded by the Lord, grew bitter in his heart, because his party would not come off as planned. He would have this party, but it would not repay his debts to his friends, it would not gain him a closer tie to his wealthy acquaintance, and no one would be improved by the ministry of the missionary. The Host sulked.

The day of the party came, and the Host opened his door for his guests. It was not just the missionary and his two friends, but indeed, there was an extra! And no phone call! And the table was already set! And the portions already counted!

The Host admitted them all to his home, and pulled the missionary aside. "How dare you bring an extra into my home?!" he seethed. "Is it not enough that I must minister to two strangers? Now I must set a new place for a third unknown? I am not sure there will be food enough to go around! You shame me with your inconsideration!"

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The missionary replied, “Do you not have crackers? Do you not have cheese? Will we not help you to expand your table? Offer us simple fare with a cheerful heart, and ‘Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.’”

Susan Smith



Susan’s Roast Pork with Caramelized Onions and Cabbage

(Smiths always cook for at least 6, plus a guest or left-overs. I use two roasts if they are small.)

Take your clean, dry pork roast, and brown it in hot bacon fat on the sides, but not the ends. Place it in a roasting pan and pop it in the oven at 325°.

Slice two large onions and ½ of a head of cabbage, and sauté them in the bacon fat until they have given up all that raw water stuff that makes them offensive. Drain off the fat, and spoon the veggies around the roast pork, putting it back into the oven.

Since I brown the roast, it cooks pretty quickly (< 1 hour), so I put in a meat thermometer and then keep cutting it and peeking anyway, because I don’t believe the meat thermometer, which belonged to my grandmother, who probably got it in the 1940s. (This method of monitoring can be substituted with anything that makes you comfortable, if you do not have a 60-year old meat thermometer.)

Be sure, if you use some method that does not involve frequent checking, that you monitor the browning of the vegetables. When they get brown and tasty, but not crunchy, you should scoop them to a dish and reheat them in the microwave just prior to serving.

When it is just no longer pink, but still juicy, I slice the pork (across the grain), placing it in a spiral on the platter, and then spoon the hot cabbage mixture into the middle, letting it spill generously over top of the meat. The vegetables are so juicy, that I don’t make a gravy unless I am also serving mashed potatoes. We just eat the meat and cabbage together.

(Adam, who found out that his sister Maggie had had pizza when she missed this meal, pitied her, and told her “Nothing beats Mom’s cooking, ‘cause she cooks from the heart!” Even Libby ate the cabbage, and seconds, though she had to be persuaded to try it.)

Women’s Retreat
Making Connections

(February 6-8)

We’ll continue to take registrations through January 4.

Point of View (women in missions)

How do you keep the Christmas/Easter traditions that are important to you while you're in a culture that may not appreciate them?

Ginger Boyd says: It isn't always possible to cling to old traditions, so I've made new ones:

To market, to market to buy a fat pig... Several weeks before Christmas (before the prices have gone up too much due to the season) I head down to Yaoundé's central market with a couple of my neighbors to buy a fat pig (or two). This is my Christmas present to my neighbors. It's quite an event when the pigs arrive, alive and squealing, in the neighborhood. A butcher is chosen and everyone gathers around for the slaying and dividing up of the meat among all the neighbors. It's the neighborhood matriarch who oversees the dividing up and makes sure that everyone has an appropriate share of the meat. Many Americans think its turkey that makes a Christmas feast, for my Cameroonian neighbors, nothing beats pork!

The Christmas feast... Carrie and I have been sharing a house in Yaoundé off and on (when I'm in Yaoundé) for eight years. Over the years, we've developed our own Christmas traditions. We take the time to decorate the house, inviting friends to help hang the lights, trim the tree and set out last year's Christmas cards (since this year's won't come until after the New Year up until Easter!) And of course we play Christmas music. On Christmas Eve, Carrie and I exchange the gifts we have for each other. And on Christmas Day we have three or four Cameroonian Christian families over for a big Christmas feast. It's hard to find turkey and trimmings, so we tend to make this feast very Cameroonian rather than American with such things as ndolé (bitter leaf with beef and ground peanuts), fried plantains, pork in tomato sauce, casava, pan fried chicken, grilled fish, rice, yams, etc. We exchange gifts, bat balloons around the room, read a Christmas devotion, sing carols and pray. Then we all clean up the mess together and divide up the left over food among our guests as they leave for home. Over the years, this tradition has become more precious to me than my family's traditional Christmas. It is a mix of American and Cameroonian cultures and fits nicely with the mix of cultures I have become.

Ginger serves in Cameroon (Africa) with Wycliffe Bible Translators. She joined Wycliffe in 1988 and has been in Cameroon since 1993.



Dog Training
Check out the first online dog training center. There's lots of info online and the owner training is done through a newsletter (free) you sign up for: www.dogowners.info

January 2004

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>
				1
4	5 <i>B. Moore Study 7:00pm</i> <i>First hamburger (1889)</i>	6 <i>Bible Study 9:30am</i> <i>Prayer Mtg. 10:00am</i> <i>Sherlock Holmes' birthday (1845)</i> <i>Single Moms 6:30pm</i>	7 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i> <i>Playgroup 10:00am</i>	8 <i>3 R's Study</i> <i>Craft Circle</i>
11	12	13 <i>Bible Study 9:30am</i> <i>Brainstorming Noon</i> <i>First Mickey Mouse cartoon (1930)</i> <i>Prayer Mtg. 10:00am</i> <i>Single Moms 6:30pm</i>	14 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i> <i>MOPS 7:00pm</i> <i>Playgroup 10:00am</i>	15 <i>Craft Circle</i>
18	19 <i>B. Moore Study 7:00pm</i>	20 <i>Bible Study 9:30am</i> <i>Ebenezer III 9:30am</i> <i>Prayer Mtg. 10:00am</i> <i>Single Moms 6:30pm</i>	21 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i> <i>Playgroup 10:00am</i>	22 <i>3 R's Study</i> <i>Craft Circle</i>
25	26	27 <i>Bible Study 9:30am</i> <i>Prayer Mtg. 10:00am</i> <i>Single Moms 6:30pm</i>	28 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i> <i>Playgroup 10:00am</i>	29 <i>Craft Circle</i>

<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	2 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i>	3 <i>Merry Widows 4:00pm</i>
<i>7:00pm</i> <i>Noon</i>	9 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i> <i>Flirting was outlawed in New York (1942)</i>	10
<i>Noon</i>	16 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i>	17
<i>7:00pm</i> <i>Noon</i>	23 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i>	24
<i>Noon</i>	30 <i>Body & Soul 9:15am</i>	31 <i>Scotch tape first sold (1928)</i>

Next brainstorming lunch

January 13, Noon in the Ministry Center



Do It Yourself (a cable channel)

has a website where you can get directions on lots different kinds of projects – even how to set a table (www.diy.net.com/).



Things change

This newsletter has a long lead time - plans can change before it arrives in your mailbox. Be sure to check the weekly bulletin for updated information.

Thots and Things

M&Ms

When it comes to reading books, are you a **Martha**? A woman who would love to read more but who finds the press of daily obligations keeping you too busy?

Or are you a *Mary*? The kind of woman with her nose in a book while the soup is boiling over on the stove?

Whichever best describes your style, M&Ms is a book club for you. Over the course of the next 12 months, we will be recommending five or six good books to read, following up with opportunities for you to join other SPEP women for small group discussion.

Here's how it will work:

1. Watch the newsletters and Sunday bulletins for the current book recommendation and details on how to order it. We will try to have one or two copies available in the church lending library, too. If the topic interests you, order the book and read it. We will leave between four and six weeks to give everyone plenty of reading time.
2. Then watch the newsletters and Sunday bulletin for times and places to meet with your fellow M&Ms to discuss the book you have just read. You pick the meeting time that fits best into your schedule.

What will we be reading? Everything! Novels. Theology. Current events. Apologetics. Make some suggestions. What books have you been longing to read? What books have you loved that you wish every woman at SPEP could read?

For more information or to make suggestions, contact Christiane Carlson-Thies (████████████████████).

Wonder how much is actually in that can?

You can find a chart of can sizes and the approximate number of cups inside at frugalhomemaker.com/canequiv.htm



Organizing Tip – The 10 Minute Pick-up

Control the chaos. Schedule a consistent 10 Minute Pick-up time each night. At this time, all family members are responsible for clearing out and putting away their belongings from the main family area.

Micki's Corner

Some women are naturals at raising children. They take things in stride and know exactly what do to in any given situation. It hasn't been like that for me. I always felt the weight of being responsible for another person. And every stage knocked me off my feet and I had to find my balance again. "If only she were old enough for me to discuss this with her then she'd understand." But when she was old enough to discuss, she was old enough to argue!

Parenting an adult child is by far the hardest. You can't pick them up and turn them in a different direction anymore. Their decisions are theirs to make, not yours. And they don't always want your advice.

But I've found an example of adult parenting. It has the wrong title, though. I would call it the Parable of the Prodigal's Father. I've looked at that father over and over again to understand what my role is now. And as I look at him I see a parent who allows his child to make his own decisions. Then he waits and watches (and I'm sure he prayed a lot, too). When his son returned, he didn't just let him in, he ran to meet him.

This father teaches me that we need to make room for failure. It's part of the maturing process. And for us to be a part of God's working it for good in our children, we need to make sure that we don't slam any doors – giving them nowhere to turn.

So, I have my balance for this stage – I'll watch and pray and keep home an open and safe place if she needs it.

Micki Parkinson



Behind the Scenes of Women's Life

Flo Wolfe, Director of Women's Ministries
Barbara Smith, Newsletter Coordinator
Micki Parkinson, Design and Editing

New neighbors? New home? How about a gift-in-a-jar?

There are thirty different mixes at frugalhomemaker.com/giftsinajar.htm