

Women's Life

January 2006

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:17-19

As I welcome each new year, I choose a passage that will direct my activities and spiritual emphasis for the upcoming 365 days; this year's compass point is from Ephesians 1. These verses remind me that though my physical eyesight makes me reach for my reading glasses more frequently, my spiritual acuity improves as I ask Christ to enlighten the eyes of my heart.

The eyes of my heart? Isn't that a mismatch? According to Paul, the connection between my eyes and heart involves a deepening understanding of three things: the hope of His calling, the riches of His glory, and the greatness of His power. How the Lord will help "grow" my heart this year remains a mystery to me, but I want to check my vision so that with the glasses of faith, I will be pliable clay in my Master's hands.

Our Christian beliefs, starched and pressed for public display, can end up like a pile of dirty laundry when meeting the ugliness of real life. A smudge of defiance, a stain of gossip, or a tear from neglect -- all render the clothing in need of attention if it is to be serviceable again. As life and beliefs collide (to borrow a Carolyn Custis James phrase) an enlightened heart will provide the theology to continue.

When the Lord helps our vision, we can see hope in the calling He has in store for us.. Whether we continue in this location, with these

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circumstances, with the current degree of health and mental faculties or face some unusual challenges or blessings, God offers hope. We need to remember that He ordains our lives for His purposes. Enlightened eyes see hope, not fear in God's sovereignty.

The next visual signpost shows us the variety of spiritual riches that we, as God's children, inherit, both now and in eternity. Now that vantage point can halt our whining and worrying! Counting our blessings, actively sharing "His glorious inheritance" with others, and praying for many people who hurt are all activities that will get us beyond the self-indulgence that jades our culture.

Finally, the eyes of our heart need to sharply focus on the kind of power that raised Jesus from the dead. When feeling spiritually or physically weak, it helps to appreciate and appropriate His power. Let's remember "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."

Wishing us all better, clearer vision in 2006...

Flo



"Be still and know I am God"

I am sitting in a comfortable white whicker chair, listening to the sounds of the crickets and gazing upon a flawlessly blue sky. A soft breeze gently cools me as I watch the water flow behind the newly decorated summer home of a friend.

God does give us His best!

God provides this peaceful dwelling as I finish an exhausting summer of busyness. I need this time of peace and quiet so I can ponder all that God has done and consider the direction of my future. And finding silence and peace in my home is challenging between the dogs' needs and the phone ringing, so I regularly plan these special times of communion away with the Lord.

(Be still and know I am God—continued)

Over multiple years of drawing away with the Lord, I have had many intimate moments with the Trinity—to understand Him personally and the role each Person plays in my life. God has revealed Himself as my Father onto whose lap I crawl when I am afraid; Jesus is my Savior and Bridegroom who give me hope; the Holy Spirit is my counselor, comforter and friend who is always with me. These times of communion have been life changing as God has led me to special scriptures that excite my heart, or as He has led me to simply rest in His presence.

When I begin time alone with the Lord, I kneel and ask Him to direct my time because He knows my needs. He has always been faithful to do so.

On one occasion, when I drew away with a heavy heart, I cried out to the Lord in despair and hopelessness, and the Lord led me to Deut. 31:8 *The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you, He will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid: do not be discouraged.* These words brought peace and comfort to me.

The next time away when I needed my Daddy, the Lord directed me to Is. 41:11 *He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young.* God showed me in His word that His arms were around me and holding me close to His heart which brought tears of joy.

God has rebuked, challenged, encouraged, and held me as I met with Him. God blessed and healed me as I continued to be available and seek communion. But sadly many people believe they don't have time so they choose comfort in other ways.

Society today searches for answers but its answer is a candy bar as a comforter and money as our savior. But I would challenge you to take the time away to really know God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, because only He truly satisfies us and He is our all and in all—and I assure you, you will never regret it.

Theresa Olsavsky



This month in history

George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America: Jan. 1, 1776

A patent was issued for the first typewriter to an English inventor, Henry Mill: Jan. 7, 1714

Elizabeth Blackwell was awarded her MD by the Medical Institute of Geneva, New York, becoming America's first woman doctor: Jan. 23, 1849

By popular request: Artichoke Tarts (served at Joy Beans' shower)

1 package wonton wrappers

Josh and Jen

4–8 oz. cream cheese (for the consistency you like—we use 4 oz.)

4 oz. shredded havarti cheese

4 oz. shredded cheddar cheese

½ sweet bell pepper, chopped (orange, red, or yellow—we use orange most of the time)

¼–½ tsp. ground red pepper (we use cayenne)

1 Tbs. dijon mustard

14 oz. can of artichoke hearts, drained and chopped

Heat oven to 350°, if using non-coated muffin tins, spray lightly with cooking spray (non-stick tins usually don't need it). Mix all ingredients except wonton wrappers (adjust for taste and consistency). Line each muffin cup with a wonton wrapper with the ends of wrapper sticking up. Put 1–2 spoonfuls of filling in each wrapper, spray ends of wrappers so that they crisp nicely in oven and bake 10–15 min. (until cheeses melt and tips of wrappers brown and crisp, but are not burned). Watch the first batch carefully and adjust the time for your oven.

This month in Women's Ministry

Acts Study Tuesday mornings 9:30–11:00 (MC 2) This study resumes Jan. 10

2 Peter and Jude Tuesday mornings 9:30–11:00 (Narthex B) This study begins Jan. 31

Thursday Evening Bible Study coming in late January—watch the bulletin for details.

Coffee Fellowship each Sunday—between services

Merry Widows will meet at noon on January 7

MOPS January 11

MOPS Steering Committee January 25

Leadership Team meets on January 10 in Flo's office; contact her if you wish to serve in some capacity

Women's Life deadline January 15. Email articles no longer than 500 words to Micki (██████████).

Single Moms' Ministry meets January 17 and 31 at 6:45PM. Childcare available

Boundaries in Dating meets January 10 and 24 at 6:45PM. Childcare available

A Faith That Works resumes on January 18, 2006 at 7:30PM (MC 3)

Moms of College Kids will meet January 28

Scrapbooking Daze will meet January 28

<p>Home Management Seminar January 7 9:00-1:00AM</p>

Looking to the Future:

Sweetheart Dessert will be held on Saturday, February 11—watch the bulletin for more information

All EP Church Women's Retreat with Carolyn Custis James speaking and Cindy Bauchspies leading worship—March 31–April 2.

Thoughts and things

Surfing the Web

Christian Work at Home Moms has articles like:

10 Days to Working at Home

Is It Possible To Work From Home? Home-Based Business vs. Second Job—The Choice is Yours

www.cwahm.com/univ/business-articles.htm

Purposeful Singleness (Christian Singles living purposefully for Christ) has a monthly email newsletter:

www.singleness.org/eneews.shtml



Crockpot Turkey Stew

Comfort food for cold winter days. *Micki Parkinson*

- 1 lb. turkey breast cutlets, cut into 1" cubes
- ¼ c. unbleached flour
- 1½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 c. fat-free beef broth
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- ¼ tsp. paprika
- 2 carrots, sliced 1" thick (or use baby carrots)
- 2 potatoes, cut in bite size chunks
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, sliced
- 1 c. mushroom caps, quartered

Place meat in crock-pot. Mix flour, salt and pepper; pour over meat. Stir to coat meat with flour. Add remaining ingredients and stir to mix well. Cover and cook on Low 8-10 hours (High: 4-5 hours). Remove bay leaf and stir stew thoroughly before serving. Servings: 4

Per Serving: 225 Calories; 2g Fat (6.5% calories from fat); 30g Protein; 25g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 64mg Cholesterol; 1180mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 Grain(Starch); 4 Lean Meat; 1½ Vegetable; 0 Fat.

Muff 'n me

There's a system for getting Muffy to the vet. We have to corner her, she gives up and lets out a pitiful little cry. We wrap her in a white blanket, put her in a carrier and take her out to the car.

There I was on the floor (in the same corner) and Muff was really upset. She tried scratching on her post so I would get up and get her a treat. Then she jumped on my chest (CPR?). I was wrapped in a white blanket, put in a carrier and taken out the door.

She stayed upset until I came home. Glenn was sure that she knew where I was—in a furry sort of way. As soon as she heard my voice she came running. Then, for a couple days she checked on me regularly. If she didn't know where I was, she would yell until I called to her.

We've all heard stories about animals doing amazing things. Saving heart attack victims, getting people out of burning buildings, going for help when their people are in trouble. I recently heard about a dog that had only been adopted days before running to a neighbor's house when her person needed help.

God's creation is an amazing thing—especially when you narrow your focus to particular pieces like animals. The things they do and the ways those furry little heads work are fascinating.

The Bible says that God gave us dominion over the creatures. It seems to me that means more than most people think. Ruling over the animals doesn't just mean telling them what to do, using them for our own good (or to the point of extinction) with no thought for them.

No king lasts long if he has no thought for his people. Ruling over the animals must be similar—watching, learning and understanding God's specific design for each one and working with Him to provide the atmosphere where His creature can flourish—whether cat, dog or anything else.

Muffy is a sweetheart and did her best to care for me. God has given me the responsibility of doing the same for her.

Micki Parkinson





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Behind the Scenes of Women's Life

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