

Women's Life



November 2006

Retreats and God's Sovereignty

While spending a few days at our western Maryland cabin and wrestling in prayer over some health decisions pending, I told the Lord that I wanted to drop the subject for a few days. I was tired of the same thing always topping my prayer list. Not 20 minutes after uttering that prayer, Rita called to tell me that a very garbled message had come into her home that seemed to indicate that Sue Jakes, our retreat speaker, had had a stroke. A phone call to a secretary in Lawrenceville, Georgia, confirmed a high blood pressure incident.

On Monday we heard the sad news that Sue had spent last week in the hospital and was now on bed rest at her son's home through the end of October. She would have to cancel as our speaker. I had a strong sense that this did not surprise our sovereign Lord at all. He would minister to Sue and her family, and He would provide His choice for our retreat speaker. The words of Psalm 109:21 are trustworthy and true: "But you, O Sovereign LORD, deal well with me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me." The words do not, however, absolve us of seeking and praying.

In a flurry of calls and emails, I enlisted people to pray, and I sought names of women who might be able, with less than three weeks' preparation, to present a meaningful retreat. When I spoke to Jane Patete, the head of Women's Ministry for the PCA, she first mentioned the sovereignty of our Lord and the exciting plans that He would make known to us. Jane also suggested a speaker that Rhonda had heard in Atlanta during the International WIC Retreat in September. This woman had experienced great brokenness over the death of her son,

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

and had authored several books. Through the tragedy, the Lord helped her develop a theology of grief.

So I typed an email and left two phone messages during Monday. After counseling at church until late Monday, I came home having heard nothing from Sharon Betters. Yet I slept on Monday night, drifting off comforted by the psalmist's words: "For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth." (71:5) and "The sovereign Lord is my strength," from Habakkuk 3:19.

As I wrote the second paragraph of this article at home on Tuesday afternoon, I answered a call from Sharon and had a delightful conversation with the woman the Lord had appointed to speak to us at our retreat this year. Sue Jakes' planned to speak about "Clay Pots: Broken and Ready for Use." Sharon Betters will come at the same theme using Acts 16 as it applies to any difficulties we face. "Will You Sing at Midnight?" With great praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, I suspect I'll be doing some singing at midnight tonight!

Flo Wolfe



No one who holds a newborn infant in their arms can deny the feelings of wonder at God's creation or of responsibility for that needy new life. Every parent wants to support and nurture this unique new person, entrusted to them from our heavenly father.

In a recent conversation, I had the opportunity to reflect upon my twenty-odd years of experience as a speech-language pathologist for very young children. I explained that a large portion of my time and responsibility is spent encouraging parents to be uncompromising—to give the very best of their time, attention and nurturing discipline to their young child.

As I've struggled to put my experiences into writing, this is what the Lord gave me:

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

1. Our culture believes that if an infant, toddler or preschooler has their physical needs met in a child-safe, affectionate environment that is all they need. Let me assure you that more is needed for a child to develop the communication and language comprehension skills for academic and biblical learning.

Infants are born with only 60% of their adult brain mass. The additional 40% develops as a result of the child's interaction with his world during the first 4-6 years. This additional brain mass consists of connective pathways that are formed through learning. Early language learning is facilitated by a process known as "mommy talk" (mothers of infants raise their speaking pitch, slow their rate of speech and simplify the vocabulary and grammar). Noisy, busy, distracting group environments rob young children of the advantages that come from that one-to-one interaction ideally suited to the growing mind. Obviously there are many factors parents of young children need to consider in making childcare/work decisions, but please be aware that these choices can have a long-ranging developmental impact.

2. Raising our children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" has a purpose—so they will not depart from it when they grow old (Eph.6:4).

Our children are born with their own unique temperament. Their characters are molded and shaped by loving parents and daily experience. Loving discipline and boundary setting keep a child safe, but also lead to emotional, spiritual and cognitive growth.

Allowing a young child to choose all of their activities not only robs them of learning opportunities, it can actually be damaging. Hoping to avoid "a scene" in public or private, far too many exhausted parents give way to the seemingly relentless demands of their child. Doing so denies them the opportunity to grow, and can distort their world view by elevating their desires to a level of prominence that leaves little room for the preeminence of God and his guidance.

To raise our children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" is a worthy and noble endeavor in which we as parents should not allow ourselves, as Paul instructs, to "grow weary in well doing" (Gal.6:9) but rest in the assurance that God's instruction is wise and will meet our needs if we are faithful in heeding it.

Cornelia Lynn

November

It's Peanut Butter Lovers Month.
Chaos Never Dies Day—Nov. 9
Bible Week is the fourth week of
November

This month in history

First medical school for women,
Boston Female Medical School,
opened in Boston—Nov. 1, 1848.
(In 1874 it merged with the Boston
University School of Medicine
to become one of the first co-ed
medical schools.)

Pop Tarts were
created—Nov.
19, 1965

Traffic light patented—Nov. 20,
1923

Pligrims landed in what would
become Provincetown—Nov. 21,
1620

Overflowing Photos?

Online Organizing Newsletter for October has all kinds of ideas (<http://www.onlineorganizing.com/Newsletters.asp>)

- 9 Tips For Taking Great Digital Photos
- De-Cluttering Your Digital Photos
- Family Journals
- No Time to Scrapbook?
- Saving Your Digital Images Forever
- Scrapbooking Step-by-Step
- Travel Journals
- Get Your Photos Organized!



In a recent *WORLD* magazine, article Andrée Seu described the one thing we don't do, because it is hard work. (September 30, 2006) And she does it in such a way that is hard to swallow.

She says, "Forgiving is the hardest thing you will ever do. That's why most people don't do it. We talk about it, cheer for it, preach on it, and are sure we've practiced it. But mostly the illusion of having forgiven is that the passage of time dulls memory. The ruse will come to light with hair-trigger vengeance when fresh offense hurls in to empty out the gunnysack of half-digested grievances."

She found no one who said they forgave, and this is what it felt like. She then describes how she has failed to forgive—a failure that is not simply rooted in refusal, but in the head games we can play when another has hurt us. We know what we should do, but get hung up on an imagined dialogue that is in our heads—and never on our lips.

Sometimes it is good to restrain our words, especially when it comes to e-mail—a deadly snare for hurting hearts. But after a season

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 1)

of quiet before the Lord, we need to go to the one who has hurt us, and speak—for hurt and anger, bottled up often spill out in unhappy ways—remember Absalom and Amnon—and King David’s total failure to reconcile the wrong done to Tamar?

Now, Ms. Sue serves up a plate of particulars that don’t seem too tasty:

“Forgiveness is a brutal mathematical transaction done with fully engaged faculties. It’s my pain instead of yours. I eat the debt. I absorb the misery I wanted to dish out on you, and you go scot-free. Beware the forgiveness that is tendered soon after injury; be suspicious. Real forgiveness needs a time lag, for it is wrought in private agony before it ever comes to public amnesty. All true acts of courage are thus done in secret.”

“I”—the injured party—“I eat the debt?”

Well, didn’t Christ choke down the gall of all my sin?

Remembering all He swallowed for me, recasts that plate of particulars a bit—suddenly I see my serving for what it is—wholly of grace! So, how much may I safely share with the one who hurt me—perhaps an amount of seventy times seven?

Considering the hurts that break the body apart—husband from wife, child and parent, friend from friend, I wonder that the church of Jesus Christ is not on appetite suppressants? *Barbara Smith*



“If you are single, do not be single for the lack of something better to do. Be single to the glory of God, undivided in your devotion to him. You have the freedom and the time, often the money, to take bold adventure in the name of Jesus Christ. You can do things that would be unwise or impossible for married Christians to do. And if the days are evil, then godly singles should be the strength of the church. Singleness is not a curse; it is a blessing both to the single individual and to the church. ... Singleness is not an accident. It is not a misfortune. It is a divine calling.”

From Fine China is for Single Women Too (Lydia Brownback)

Eat your veggies

Marinated Green Beans Almandine

Serves 4 to 6

1 lb green beans, trimmed	1 Tbs lemon juice
¼ cup heavy cream or half-and-half	1 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbs Dijon-style mustard	Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
	½ cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted

Boil or steam the green beans until tender but still firm, 4 to 5 minutes. Rinse under running water to stop the cooking and drain. Whisk together the cream, mustard, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Pour over the beans and toss to combine. Top with the toasted almonds and serve chilled or at room temperature.

Rosemary Garlic Buttered Potatoes

Makes 6 servings

You may boil the potatoes a few hours ahead of time (or even a day or two in advance). Refrigerate until a few hours before serving, then keep at room temperature until adding the rest of the ingredients and browning at the last minute.

3 lbs baby red potatoes	¼ cup butter
2 Tbs olive oil	Salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 crushed garlic cloves	
¼ cup fresh rosemary, minced	

Scrub the potatoes, and if desired, remove a thin strip of peel from around the centers of the potatoes. Cook the potatoes in a large pot of salted boiling water until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain well, then return to the pot. Place the pot over medium high heat and add the olive oil, garlic, and rosemary. Cook, stirring constantly, until the potatoes are light golden brown and the garlic is fragrant, about 5 minutes. Be careful not to overcook or burn the garlic. Add the butter and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot.



Flo Wolfe, Dir. of Women's Ministries
Micki Parkinson, Design and Editing

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEVERNA PARK, MD
PERMIT NO. 214