

The Heart of a Woman Inc.

Spring 2005



Loving Yourself
in the light of God's love

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From the Editor's Desk:

With this issue it is our desire to help each one of us as women to understand the basic problem many of us struggle with—a feeling of worthlessness, to face it honestly and then to believe God's Word, which tells us that we are precious in His sight. We are women of worth—no matter what our background may have been, what age we are, where we live, or what our life's work may be. Now some of us will be more confident and therefore this issue of love may be more relevant to some than others, but as we have set about writing for this magazine, —even those of us who have more peace, have struggled deeply. God has had us in His school of life, learning where we too have had misdirected yardsticks and He has brought some of us through tearful times in order that we too may discover His great love for us and just how worthy we are in His sight, simply because of what Christ Jesus has done for us.

Our prayer is that you our readers, will know this great love of God, sent to us through His Son and that knowing it, you may see yourselves as women of worth, chosen and loved and special in His sight.

Love in Christ Jesus

Wendy Davie

Life is a Schoolroom

In it, we encounter pop quizzes and periodic examinations. You can't have a schoolroom without tests—at least I've never seen one...

Throughout the educational process our knowledge is assessed on the basis of examinations.

The curriculum of Christ-likeness is much the same.

Our Christian maturity is measured by our ability to withstand the tests that come our way without having them shake our foundation or throw us into a tailspin...

The wonderful thing about God's schoolroom, however, is that we get to grade our own papers.

You see, He doesn't test us so He can learn how well we're doing.

He tests us so WE CAN DISCOVER HOW WELL WE'RE DOING!

Listen to what our Teacher is trying to teach us.



By Priscilla Gaston

The Yardstick of Love

It is important for us to understand that there must be a yardstick or gauge that we can use to measure the love we so desperately crave.

- If we take it, as the world does, that it is self-esteem, then our yardstick is unsatisfactory—it falls terribly short and we will never discover the love we so long for. We can use all the tricks and tools of counselling to build our self-esteem, but none of it is a complete cure, although it may appear to help for a time.
- If we use as our yardstick, friendships and family—that too will fail us, for family and friends have a dreadful habit of being human just like we are. They will make mistakes and fail us in some way; in the same way we too will fail them.
- Maybe we strive to measure it by our own abilities—if they have not already fallen short, then there will come a day when we discover that they too are short lived and will only last whilst the strength of life and health exist.
- Ah...possibly you, like me, have thought your yardstick should be to have a good (Christian) husband and loving (Christian) children—this too falls short. They bring great blessing, but even though I live in peace and love with my husband and I know deep down our children love and respect us both...my thoughts at times still bring me low and I find myself asking of my husband “do you love me, but why do you love me?” Then our families (who live many miles away), do not contact me as much as I long for and once again my thoughts tell me lies such as “they don’t love me any more, I wonder what I’ve done? They don’t seem to need me—I’m of no use now I am older”.



You see all these things are yardsticks based on feelings, and feelings change according to circumstances, environments, health and relationships.

What can we use as our yardstick of love? **It has to be the Word of God**—for only it is truth unchanged and unable to be changed. Without this yardstick, we learn to cover up the emptiness and longing for love. For those outside of Christian circles, they may use—the art of becoming a great achiever, parties, drugs friends etc. However for those of us inside Christian circles all too often it is becoming overly busy—helping others, visiting and running Church programmes. Striving unconsciously in an attitude of SELF-WILL WORSHIP, rather than quietly loving the Lord and seeking His guidance as to what He wants us to do.

It is important for us to slow down and discover the truth about His great love—the truth about His unchanging Word. Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find it said that we should have good SELF ESTEEM. In fact many references describe

the exact opposite. We are told ¹ “**For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God**”, ² “**that there is none that is righteous, no not one**”, ³ “**that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?**” Yet constantly we hear others say, ‘Now we don’t want to talk negatively, it will cause us to have low self-esteem!’

The secret of loving ourselves in the light of God’s love is simply facing the truth about ourselves. Without Christ’s love...we are unlovable. Our kind hearts, gentle ways and good works all come to nothing in the long run, for His faithful Word tells us that there is only one way to Eternal Life—one way to enjoy His love and know we are loved...no matter what the circumstances surrounding our lives might be. That way is through Jesus Christ, for indeed ⁴ “**He is the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Him**”.

It was His great love for us that compelled Him to come to earth, to die on that dreadful cross, to be buried in the grave and then as God, to rise from the dead in great triumph. Now as the Heavenly Father looks at each one of us, He sees us as women of great worth.

If we have given our hearts over to Jesus Christ, confessing our sins and personally accepting His sacrifice for us, then that worth is in CHRIST. We now have CHRIST-ESTEEM. Our sin

that bound us has been buried with Him and we are now risen with Him. Our souls await the day when we shall see God and His Holy Son—FACE TO FACE, for dying now and being buried in the ground is not the end of the story; purely a new phase of life. This woman of worth like a precious rose has grown up one side of the wall and now her blossoms of sweet fragrance can only be seen on the other side.

On the other hand if you have not made this step, the amazing thing about God’s love is that—He still sees you as a woman of worth. Do you realize that ⁵ “**it is not His desire that anyone should miss out on this love...His Eternal Life; He desires that all should be saved.**” He promises that if you will seek Him then He will find you and come to you revealing just how much He desires to bless you and love you

For you are indeed a woman of great worth.

¹ Romans 3:23

² Romans 3:10

³ Jeremiah 17:9

⁴ John 14:6

⁵ 2 Peter 3:9b (Paraphrased)



By Wendy Davie

♦T♦R♦E♦A♦S♦U♦R♦E♦S♦

Just be quiet and think awhile

*What is it that you treasure?
What is it in the course of life
Has given you much pleasure?
Is it something from the past,
Or in the here and now:
Is it something valuable,
Or in esteem quite low?
For value just as beauty
Is not in outward show.*

*Often it is hidden
And gives an inward glow.
Perhaps you've had a kindness shown,
A loving sacrifice,
A gift that is still precious -*



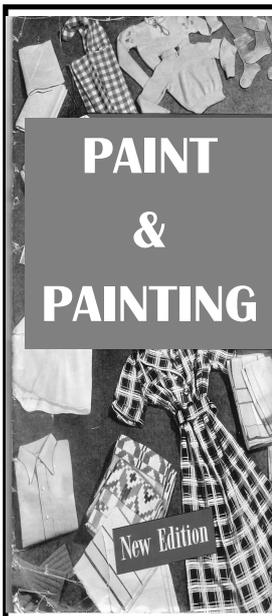
Not valued by its price.

*But there is something all can
have*

*A gift for every one
It is God's free Salvation
Found in God's own Son!
For no treasure can compare
with
Joy and Peace within
Eternal life in Heaven
And freedom from all sin.
Earthly treasures will not last,
But pass away with time -
Salvation found in Jesus Christ
Is eternally sublime!*

By Doris Rullton

*When we begin to love others as God always loves us—
soon we will feel love for ourselves.*



PAINT & PAINTING

To soften paint brushes.

Stand brushes in hot vinegar for an hour.

To maintain brushes.

Drill a hole through the body of the brush just clear of the metal band that holds the bristles in place. You can then thread a skewer or piece of wire through it so that bristles do not rest on the bottom of the container when the brush is soaking.

Paint stirring.

Use an old egg beater to thoroughly stir paint.
To make stirring and mixing easier, leave paint tin upside down in a warm room overnight. Make sure the lid is tightly sealed first!

The Prodigal Daughter

An adaptation from a story written in "What's So Amazing About Grace?" By Philip Yancey

A young girl grows up on a cane farm just outside Bundaberg in Queensland. Her parents, a bit old-fashioned, tend to overreact to her nose ring, the music she listens to, and the length of her skirts. They ground her a few times, and she seethes inside. "I hate you, I wish you were dead," she screams at her father when he knocks on the door of her room after an argument. That night she acts on a plan she has mentally rehearsed scores of times before. She runs away, taking with her as much of her parents' money and items of value as she can muster in the dead of night.

Sarah has visited Sydney only once before, on a school trip with her class to visit Taronga Park Zoo and a number of sites of "historical significance". Because newspapers and television news in Bundaberg report in lurid detail the gangs, the drugs and the violence in downtown Sydney, (particularly Kings Cross), she concludes that is probably the last place her parents will look for her. The Sunshine Coast maybe, or Brisbane, but not Sydney.

Her second day there she meets a man who drives the nicest car she's ever seen. He offers her a ride, buys her lunch, and arranges a place for her to stay. He gives her some pills that make her feel better than she's ever felt before. She was right all along, she decides: her parents were keeping her from all the fun.

The good life continues for a month, two months, and a year. The man with the big car—she calls him "Boss", teaches her a few things that men like. Since she's underage, men pay a premium for her. She lives in a penthouse and orders room service whenever she wants. Occasionally she

thinks about the folks back home, but their lives now seem so boring and provincial that she can hardly believe she grew up there.

Sarah has a brief scare when she sees her picture printed on the back of a milk carton with the headline "Have you seen this child?" But by now she has blonde hair, and with all the make-up and body-piercing jewellery she wears, nobody would mistake her for a child. Besides, all of her friends are runaways, and nobody squeals in the "Cross".

After the first year swallow signs of illness appear, and it amazes her how fast the boss turns mean. "These days, we can't mess around," he growls, and before she knows it she's out on the street without a penny to her name. She still turns a couple of tricks a night, but they don't pay much, and all the money goes to support her habit. When winter blows in she finds herself sleeping on metal grates outside the big department stores. "Sleeping" is the wrong word—a teenage girl at night in downtown Sydney can never relax her guard. Dark bands circle her eyes. Her cough worsens.

One night she lies awake listening for footsteps, all of a sudden everything about her life looks different.

Sarah no longer feels a woman of the world. She feels like a little girl lost in a cold and frightening city. She begins to whimper. Her pockets are empty and she's hungry. She needs a fix. She pulls her legs tightly underneath her and shivers under the newspapers she's piled on top of her coat. Something jolts a

flash of memory and a single image fills her mind: of September in Bundy, when thousands of mango trees flower at once, with her golden retriever dashing through the rows and rows of newly planted sugar cane in chase of a tennis ball. "God, why did I leave?" She says to herself, and pain stabs at her heart. "My dog back home eats better than I do now!" She's sobbing and she knows in a flash that more than anything else in the world she wants to go home.

One night she lies awake listening for footsteps, all of a sudden everything about her life looks different.

Three straight phone calls, three straight connections with the answering machine. Sarah hangs up without leaving a message the first two times, but the third time she says, "Dad, Mum, it's me. I was wondering about maybe coming home. I'm catching a bus up your way, and I'll get there about midnight tomorrow. If you're not there, well I guess I'll just stay on the bus until it hits Cairns." It takes about twenty hours for a bus to make all the stops between Sydney and Bundaberg, and during that time she realises all the flaws in her plan. What if her parents are out of town and miss the message? Shouldn't she have waited another day or so until she could talk to them? And even if they are home, they probably wrote her off as dead long ago. She should have given them some time to get over the shock. Her thoughts bounced back and forth between those worries and the speech she is preparing for her father. "Dad I'm sorry. I know I was wrong. It's not your fault; it's all mine. Dad, can you forgive me?" She says the words over and over, her throat tightening even as she rehearses them. She hasn't apologised to anyone in years.

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The bus has been driving with lights on since Brisbane. Tiny raindrops hit the pavement rubbed worn by thousands of tyres, and the bitumen steams. She's forgotten how dark it gets at night out here. A kangaroo hops across the road and the bus swerves. Every so often, a billboard. A sign posting the kilometres to Bundy. "Oh, God," she silently prays.

When the bus finally rolls into the station, its air brakes hissing in protest, the driver announces in a crackly voice over the microphone, "Fifteen minutes, folks. That's all we have here." Fifteen minutes to decide her life. She checks herself in a compact mirror, smooths her hair, and licks the lipstick off her teeth. She looks at the tobacco stains on her fingertips, and wonders if her parents will notice. If they're there! She walks into the terminal, not knowing what to

expect.

Not one of the thousand scenes that have played out in her mind prepares her for what she sees. There, in the concrete-walls-and-plastic-chairs of the bus terminal in Bundaberg City stands a group of forty brothers and sisters, and great-aunts and uncles, and cousins and a grandmother and great-grandmother to boot.

They're all wearing goofy party hats and blowing noisemakers, and taped across the entire wall of the terminal is a computer-generated banner that reads "Welcome home Sarah!"

Out of the crowd of well-wishers breaks her Dad. She stares out through the tears quivering in her eyes like hot



mercury and begins the memorized speech, "Dad, I'm sorry. I know..." He interrupted her. "Hush child. We've got no time for that. No time for apologies. You'll be late for the party. A celebration is waiting for you at home."

Why Me?

What is it that causes us as women to feel as if we cannot love ourselves? To feel unloved by others? To feel as if God does not love us? To suffer constantly with a feeling of worthlessness? Why do some suffer more with doubts than others? There are many different things that cause us to suffer in this way. Consider these: -

1. Because we are born with sin in our hearts, we are also born with an emptiness that longs to be filled. This emptiness gives us a distinct feeling of worthlessness.



2. Having this emptiness drives us often to fill it with something. Have we considered that by taking on the ways of the world; committing more sin and becoming cold to the conscience when it is pricked—only serves to bring about a greater feeling of worthlessness?
3. What we feed our minds with, either books or TV and movies, makes a distinct impression upon our feelings of worth or worthlessness. The world and all its trappings tell us that all women should be built in a certain way. Therefore, if we do not meet their false standards, our worthlessness grows. They also tell us that we are really only sexual objects—this purely serves to make us feel like used objects, without a soul and without needs of our own.

4. Our upbringing and past experiences also affect how we view ourselves. Have you missed out on the love that a family is supposed to give? Have you been abused in some way—sexually, physically, or mentally? These things often leave long-lasting problems and sometimes it is necessary to visit with those who are trained to help us through them.
5. Our belief systems are a great barrier. If we do not believe in God and the God of Creation, then how can we begin to understand how and why He has created us? If we do not believe in Satan and the way he afflicts us, then we travel through life oblivious of the struggles he can cause us emotionally.
6. Health issues are also an

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important aspect to look at. Depression can be a clinical condition and needs to be addressed by properly trained professionals. Hormone and iron levels can lower our ability to cope with the pressures of everyday life.

7. Did you realize that your temperament can also bring about some difficulties?
 - Mrs. Sanguine turns everything into a party and so never wants to face her sin and pride. She is often selfish in her ways and oblivious to the reasons others move away from her, that is until it is too late.
 - Mrs. Choleric struggles with pride and therefore refuses to admit that she needs either God or anyone else. Being goal orientated she neglects her relationships and often leaves behind broken hearts, including her own. She covers it with more goals and hardness of heart rather than facing her

need to see her sins.

- Mrs. Phlegmatic hides from anything that tends to come close to her heart and covers up her true feelings. When she is hurt or hurting she fills her life with worldly books, movies and TV, in order to hide from the pain she feels.
 - Mrs. Melancholy often wallows in self-pity. Being such a deep thinker and an expert at analysing all that goes on around her, does not help. She dreams of a better life, thus finding it hard to face reality. She will tend to go and have plastic surgery, thinking that this will bring a change. She is overly critical and often too hard on herself. Her perfectionism drives her onwards, but unfortunately further from the peace she seeks.
8. Unreal expectations of life and others.
 9. Unreal expectations placed upon us from family, friends, work and

Church connections.

10. Bad habits, be they mental or physical.
11. A refusal to accept forgiveness from God and to forgive ourselves and a refusal to accept ourselves the way we are.

Do any of these things fit your life? Maybe you can think of others! Well dear sister, for thousands of years these aspects have affected women all over the world, yet God sees us as the crown of His creation. Did you realize that Eve was the last to be created? She is no less important than Adam, but she is different. We as Eve's descendants need to begin to view ourselves in the light of God's love for us, and not the way the world and our doubts and feelings lead us. We are each unique, each special in His sight. Each one of us is a woman of worth and God's Word tells us just how worthy that is.

Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted an old friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage.

In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Then, leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child, and he added a running obligato.

Together, the old master and the young novice transformed what could have been a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was so mesmerized that they couldn't recall what else the great master played. Only the classic, "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

Perhaps that's the way it is with God! What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't always graceful flowing music. However, with the hand of the Master, our life's work can truly be beautiful. The next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You may hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

May you feel His arms around you and know that His hands are there, helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces. Remember, God doesn't seem to call the equipped, rather, He equips the 'called'. Life is more accurately measured by the lives you touch than by the things you acquire.

Thank you Heather Driver for this lovely piece



By Margret Lepke
Dip. Naturopathy
Dip. Nat. Med. & Nutrition
Dip. Theology
B.Soc.Sc. (Counselling)
MATMS & MNHAA

Natural Medicine

Frequently Asked Questions



Am I depressed?

What can I do without resorting to anti-depressant medication?

Clinical depression is not the same as having the blues once in a while. Instead, it is a psychiatric disorder due to physiological changes producing four or more of the following symptoms consistently, almost every day, for a period of at least 2 weeks and ongoing: a depressed, sad or empty mood, irritability, excessive crying, markedly diminished interest/pleasure in ordinary activities (including sex), sleep and/or eating disturbances, constant fatigue/loss of energy, psychomotor disturbances, feelings of inappropriate guilt, worthlessness or helplessness, and a diminished ability to think or concentrate.

There may also be increased visits to the doctor, chronic aches and pains that don't respond to treatment, and/or recurrent thoughts of death and/or suicide. Christians often think that depression has no place in a person yielded to God – but this is not so! Many faithful servants have suffered from depression and even considered suicide! I just met two extraordinary Christian women who told of their experiences with depression and bipolar disorder, and how the Lord carried and sustained them through it all. Please do not think that clinical depression is brought about by the person suffering from it. It has many origins, and in this fallen world even Christians suffer from hormonal and other biochemical imbalances that often have no causal explanation. There is therefore no reason to feel ashamed! If you think that you, or someone you know, is suffering from depression, there is a really good self-test at:

<http://www.moodchange.info/>

Other helpful sites are:

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au>

<http://www.depressionet.com.au>

<http://www.metanoia.org/suicide/>

On the positive side, there are very effective natural substances for the treatment of mild to moderate (but NOT severe or major) depression. The most well known herb is Hypericum perforatum, commonly known as St. John's wort (wort = plant). Several studies have shown it to be just as effective as tricyclic and SSRI (serotonin reuptake inhibitor) medications, but with virtually none of their negative side effects. St. John's wort inhibits stress induced physiological changes and therefore stops stress from getting started. It acts as a mood enhancer and stabiliser, relieves anxiety and depression,

has a calming effect on the nervous system, and supports the body's natural defence mechanism. Trials have shown that the best therapeutic dose for depression is 300 mg of the dried herb in tablet or capsule form (standardised to contain 0.3% hypericin), to be taken three times daily. This means a hypericin content of 2.7 gr daily. However, most over the counter products in Australia contain less hypericin, which means that you have to take more of the herb. For example, Healtheries produce a 1.8 gr St. John's wort capsule containing 1000 mcg (1 gr) of hypericin. This means that you will require 2 – 3 capsules daily (depending on individual need) to obtain 2 – 3 gr of hypericin. Other brands have similar contents, but please check the label. And please be patient, St. John's wort takes a little while to work (from a few days to a few weeks). Additionally, you can take 1000 - 2000 mg (1 - 2 gr) of Valerian root about one hour before bedtime to help you sleep better, and the herb Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*) can be helpful to reduce sexual dysfunction associated with many antidepressant medications. All of these herbs can be taken simultaneously without adverse interactions, but please be aware that St. John's wort (Hypericum) should NOT be taken in conjunction with other antidepressants or with certain other medications, because it will alter their effectiveness: oral contraceptives, theophylline, warfarin, digoxin, reserpine, cyclosporine, loperamide and indinivir (a protease inhibitor used for HIV).

A less well known, but even more effective and more quickly working substance is SAmE (s-adenosyl-L-methionine). This is a naturally occurring source of methyl groups in the brain, which are necessary to produce feel-good neurotransmitters. Impaired methylation seems to occur in several neurological and psychiatric disorders, including depression, and SAmE supplementation provides an excellent, fast working antidepressant action. It is interesting to note that the synthesis of SAmE is closely linked with folate and vitamin B12, since a deficiency of these two vitamins may also cause nerve and emotional disorders including depression. As to dosage, SAmE should be taken on an empty stomach, preferably 1 hour away from food, starting at a dosage of 200 mg once or twice daily. If results aren't seen in a few days, the dose can be increased, up to 800 mg daily if needed, but 400 mg per day is usually sufficient. Since SAmE is unstable at higher temperatures, it should be kept refrigerated whenever possible,

and enteric coated tablets ensure stability. It is also important to add the necessary co-factors in order to avoid increased risk of cardiovascular disease. This means taking vitamin B6 (50 - 60 mg), vitamin B12 (up to 1000 mcg) and folic acid (800 mcg) as part of a multi-vitamin formula with food during SAmE supplementation. Unfortunately, SAmE is quite expensive, but often just one 2-week course followed by St. John's wort is sufficient to change the mood balance.

Another source of depression is an imbalance of oestrogen and progesterone, where hormone replacement therapy in cream form (preferably natural, see last issue) can do the trick. Progesterone has a calming effect on agitated depressions, being much stronger than the average barbiturate, whereas for lethargic depressions oestrogen is at least as invigorating as Prozac. Hormone supplementation has achieved remarkable success treating women who did not respond to other antidepressant medication.

Dr. Bach also invented the proven Rescue Remedy (made from flower essences) for shock, panic, hysteria or desperation. Whilst this is not an antidepressant, it is an excellent first-aid remedy for all sorts of emergencies, including panic episodes during depression. It can be used whenever there is fear and/or high stress levels, and it works really well for children as well as adults. For many more helpful strategies to combat less severe depression I can highly recommend the book "Banishing the Blues" by Hilary Boyd, published in 2000 by Mitchell Beazley, an imprint of Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, London, ISBN 1 84000 315 4. Once again, I hope that this information has been useful to you. It is not intended to be a personal prescription, so please see a qualified health practitioner for your individual needs. I wish you well until we meet again in the next issue.

Please Note:

You are invited to contribute to further articles by asking questions. Please mark them Natural Health FAQs and send them to us here at the magazine, or email them directly to Margret via her website www.drlepke.com. Whilst Margret may be unable to answer you directly, she will endeavour to respond in the issues of our magazine.



Your Doctor's Insights

Depression: Can Often Be Fixed

In Western society up to one in four women and one in eight men will have the illness known as Depression at some stage in their life. The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that in the next 20 years, depression will be the world's second leading cause of disease and disability.

Depression is a word that describes an emotion we all experience at times. Hearing bad news on the TV or in the newspaper, bad personal experiences such as a death in the family, being robbed, or even seeing one's football team being beaten, can all make us feel depressed. But this 'normal' feeling of unhappiness usually disappears quickly as other more pleasant aspects of our lives take over our thoughts.

Depression becomes an illness when the depressed mood is present inappropriately. It may last longer than usual after a bad event, or it may be present for no obvious reason. Sometimes the more obvious signs of depression—such as tearfulness and feeling unhappy—are absent. The sufferer may experience physical symptoms such as headaches and indigestion.

We don't fully understand why depression affects some people and not others. It can run in families and may follow a serious illness, an operation or childbirth. It may come after the loss of a job, or a broken marriage.

People with depression will usually have some of the following symptoms:

- Sleep disturbance—either difficulty going to sleep or early morning

wakening.

- Chronic tiredness.
- Lack of interest in things such as work, hobbies and family.
- Reduced libido (sex drive).
- Change in appetite. (Usually reduced, but sometimes over-eating).
- Lack of self esteem.
- Irritability and bad temperedness.

This wide range of symptoms means depression may not be immediately obvious to the doctor or the patient. Other illnesses such as anaemia, an under-active thyroid gland and diabetes may need excluding.

Research has shown that many depressed people have abnormalities in their brain chemistry. Treatment, usually with drugs known as *antidepressants*, of which there are several different types, can reverse these abnormalities. Recently newer drugs have been developed which are just as effective as older ones, with fewer side-effects.

These drugs are not addictive, but have to be taken for several months to be most effective.

Other forms of treatment include *psychotherapy*, - whereby the patient can talk about their problem and come to terms with it, and Electro-convulsive therapy (ECT). The latter, which involves passing an electrical current through the brain, is normally reserved for very serious cases such as those at high risk of committing suicide.

Unfortunately some people still regard those with mental illness as somehow inferior to others. This is quite wrong. Anyone's mind can get sick, in just the same way that our hearts, lungs or kidneys can. Depression should be seen as no different to other common illnesses.

If you, or someone you know, is unnaturally depressed it's nothing to be ashamed about. Seek help. Treatment can make an enormous difference to an unhappy person.

Your Doctor's Insights

Has been presented by the

"Evans Street Surgery"

Inverell, NSW

© is applicable and we thank them for the permission given to us for the ability to use their items.

Unfortunately these Doctors will be unable to answer any questions, but if you feel after reading their items, that you need to seek medical attention, we suggest that you visit your own Practitioner.

The Well That Turns Your Doubts To Faith!

Based on John 4:5—42

Jesus knew in His Spirit that there was a woman of Samaria in great need of His love and healing and so, as He and the disciples were returning to Galilee, He ensured they travelled through that country. They came upon the well that had been built by Jacob hundreds of years before and there He waited, sitting upon its edge, whilst the disciples went into the nearest town to get food. As dusk was approaching he knew it would only be a matter of time before she arrived, seeing as this was the only time she could come. Her life was a mess and as such she had become an outcast even with her own people. She had no self-respect, and lived her life as best she could, doing things that only served to lower her self-worth even further. Hiding from the (moral) folks, she lived a lonely and empty life.

Before long she came around the cliff face and stopped suddenly—there was a man, obviously a Jew, sitting on the well wall watching her approach. Should she return and wait until he had gone? No, her thirst drove her on. When she drew near, he asked for a drink of water. She looked at his kind face and thought of the gentleness of his voice for a moment before asking, “Why would you a Jew ask me a Samaritan woman for a drink? You know that no self-respecting Jew would have anything to do with us and after all I am a woman as well. Won’t you be condemned?” He looked long and hard at her and she felt as if he was looking right into her very soul. Then he said, “If you knew who I am, you would be asking me for a drink—for you have a thirsty soul and I will give you living water!”

A cynical smirk lightened her sad face and she answered, “Now come on sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep—are you greater than our father Jacob, who originally dug it and tendered his flocks from here?”

Jesus understood her doubts and replied quietly, “Dear soul, this water will never completely quench your thirst, you will have to continually return and drink from it,

but the water that I speak of is like a well that never dries up and instead springs up into everlasting life.” “Oh sir,” she quickly answered, “give me that water, I long to never be thirsty again—after all it would prevent me from having to return here all the time!” She had lived such a sad worldly life for so long, she really did not have any idea what the man was talking about and it showed in her sarcastic reply.

The darkness was drifting lower and she looked at the man strangely. There was something about him, something that was drawing her soul towards his will. Jesus, knowing her thoughts, said to her “woman, go and call your husband?” “Hmph!”, she answered shaking her head in disgust, “what husband? I don’t have one,” she almost snapped. His gentle, kind voice spoke directly to her heart now as he said, “You have told me the truth, you don’t have one, but you have had five and the one that you are with at present is not your husband either. It is time, dear soul, that you faced yourself and saw the sin that is within your heart. It is only then that life will change.”

The woman looked shocked at him and exclaimed “Sir, you sound like a prophet!” Her heart began to spring to life, she had prayed for so long that maybe she would meet someone who would be able to help her change her life. How she hated it! Then she realized that if he was a prophet, then he would be able to answer some of her other questions. Questions concerning faith and belief and why her heart was always so sad. “You know,” she said, “our fathers worshipped in this mountain, but you Jews say the only place to worship is in Jerusalem. I don’t understand what you have against us, or our place of worship—don’t we all worship the one true and living God?” Jesus quickly answered, “Woman believe me, the time will come when God’s people will neither worship here in this mountain or in Jerusalem. None of you

understand who you are really worshipping in the first place, your faith has mixtures of beliefs and so you worship more out of religious traditions. The Jews do know that salvation will only come through them and that is the core problem. They object to some of their number marrying outside of their faith and that is why they do not respect the Samaritans. However dear woman, there will come a time when things will change. You see, God is a Spirit and therefore those who worship Him need to do so in spirit and in truth.”

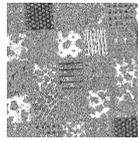


By now the woman had sat on the opposite edge of the well wall. She meant no disrespect, but her heart was opening to this man with the kind heart and gentle voice. He certainly seemed like a prophet and he seemed

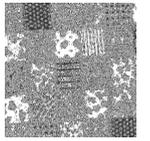
to have many answers to questions that had often troubled her. So she asked him, “You know I have been told that the Messiah is coming. He is the one who is to be called the Christ; when He comes I know He will tell us all the spiritual things we need to know.” Jesus answered her, “Dear, dear soul haven’t you recognized me yet? I am the one you speak of and I am here already and I have told you all these things. Open your heart to me and be healed.”

It was then that the disciples returned and they were shocked to see them talking together and in such a relaxed manner. However the woman could not contain herself and with a lifted soul she ran back into the town and exclaimed to all she met that the Messiah had come.

So on their request, Jesus went into the town and stayed with them for two days talking of the kingdom of heaven. Many believed in Him. Some said to the woman whose heart had been changed so dramatically, that they believed now not just because of what she had said, but because of what the Christ had also said.



Family Patchwork



A family is like a Patchwork Quilt
Each member is a piece of the total design.
They fit together as the pattern is built
With each new-born addition that is added in time.

Each shape and colour in the quilt is there
To add some interest and form.

Each person in the family is where
With God's design, they daily belong.

Just as the patchwork needs loving and care
And mending when ends are frayed.
So the family ties may need repair
With forgiveness and apologies made.

When a patch is worn out and must be replaced
A new piece of cloth can be sewn in its space.

But loved ones are so precious, each one so
unique,

They're priceless heirlooms we all want to keep.
They can't be forgotten, our memories of them
never end.

They're in our hearts forever, we always call them
friend.

Though quilts are like our families, they're made by
human hands.

Their colours fade, their fabric tears, they lose their
great demand.

But families live forever, throughout time, across
sea and land

For they are made by God alone through His
eternal perfect plan.

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From The Storybook Quilt

All attempts were made to gain permission for this piece.

A Life of Heartache for Hosea

I have always found the Old Testament Book of Hosea gut-wrenching reading. I find it difficult to understand how this prophet Hosea, who loved God and obeyed Him implicitly, could marry a prostitute knowing that her behaviour would make a complete mockery of her marriage vows. God instructed Hosea to do this to demonstrate the strength of God's love for Israel in the face of the nation's continued unfaithfulness.

I find the story of Hosea and Gomer difficult to comprehend because my human mind still grapples (and always will) with the thought of God's love for me. "God loves me" is so simple to

say; little children learn to sing "Jesus loves me"...yet those three little words cannot encapsulate the greatness of God's love for each one of us. And for me, possibly you as well, it's the smallest word of the three which holds the greatest impact—ME. Yes, God loves ME.

The Lord said, ¹ **"Hosea, Israel has betrayed me like an unfaithful wife. Marry such a woman and have children by her"**. In some Canaanite religions of that time young women were expected to have sex with the worshippers of their god Baal before marriage and they were called "temple prostitutes".

Copying the nations around, many Israelite women did the same thing and God told Hosea to marry one of these women.

Did Hosea question God? No. We read, ² **"So I married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and we had a son."** God tells Hosea that this son is to be called Jezreel because He would soon punish the people for murders previously committed by King Jehu.

Hosea and Gomer then have a daughter, who is to be named Lo-Ruhamah or "No Mercy" because God "will no longer have
(Continued on page 12)



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mercy and forgive Israel" (v6).

Then there is another son who is to be named Lo-Ammi or "Not My People" because God disowns the Israelites saying "these people are not mine, and I am not their God" (v9).

Hosea also looks into the future when "Not My People" will become "Children of the Living God" (v10) and Israel and Judah will unite and choose one leader.

Throughout Chapter 2 Hosea is God's mouthpiece as He tells the Israelite people of their sins and unfaithfulness towards Him. Although He loves His people devotedly, He cannot tolerate their unfaithfulness toward Him. Whatever action God pursues is for the Israelites' eventual good; rather than have them move progressively further away from worshipping Him, He acts so that they will move towards Him in love. Remember however, that God gave them—and us—our own individual choices and we must live with the consequences of those choices.

It appears also from Chapter 2 that Gomer was continually unfaithful to Hosea. In verse 5 Gomer goes after her lovers (and Israel, her allies) because she considered her lovers able to support her. Israel saw the allies providing the bounty, rather than coming from God.

But neither Gomer nor Israel found their lovers (allies) and thought they would return to their husband (God), having recognised who supplied their material needs. God indicates that **"I will accept you as my wife for ever, and instead of a bride price I will give you justice, fairness, love, kindness, and faithfulness. Then you will truly know who I am. I will command the sky to send rain on the earth, and it will produce grain, grapes, and olives in Jezreel Valley. I will scatter the seeds and show mercy to Lo-Ruhamah. I will say to Lo-Ammi, 'You are my people,' and they will answer, 'You are our God'"** (2:21-23). Knowing the future, this is what God sees.

But the story is far from over. Chapter 3 begins with God commanding Hosea to "fall in love with an unfaithful woman who has a lover. Do this to show that I love the people of Israel, even though they worship idols and enjoy the offering cakes made with fruit" (v1). So Hosea paid to buy this woman (probably Gomer) from her lover. This was not to be a sexual relationship as Hosea initially denied himself his husbandly rights so that Gomer might learn loyalty to her marriage vows.

From that point there is no further reference to Gomer. The rest of the book

contains God (through Hosea) reprimanding the Israelites for their unfaithfulness, disobedience and disloyalty to Him. They had shown this by continuing to worship other gods (not the true God, who had repeatedly proved His devotion and love for them) and sought fulfilment in other alliances or relationships with other nations.

Throughout the book of Hosea the love of God for His people is reiterated. There are tender, forceful words: **³ "Israel, I can't let you go. I can't give you up. How could I possibly destroy you....My feelings for you are much too strong".**

How much more heartfelt was Hosea's voice in conveying God's message because of his personal experience with unrequited love. Not only was Hosea prophesying to the Israelite people about God's faithfulness to them and their unfaithfulness to God, he was also living out this prophecy by being married to a repeatedly unfaithful wife.

This book is a challenge to be, and remain faithful to an all-loving, all-sufficient God, who desires me to respond wholeheartedly and devotedly so that there is a completely robust partnership between us.

¹ Hosea 1:2

² Hosea 1:3

³ Hosea 11:8

All quotations from the Contemporary English Version.



By Annette Lawson

Think About This ...

Imagine there is a bank that credits your account each morning with \$1440. It carries over no balance from day to day. Every morning deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every dollar of course!!!!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME. Every morning it credits you 1440 minutes. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose.

It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Every day it opens a fresh account for you. Every night it burns the remains of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against 'tomorrow'.

You must live on today's deposits.

Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and spiritual growth!

The clock is running. Make the most of today.

Anonymous

The Boarder

Almost 20 years ago I read an article about a boarder, which I have never forgotten. I have not been able to source it, but the Lord knows the faithful woman who put together the original story. We shall give all credit to her. I hope that this edited version will touch you as much as the original one did me.

Bill and Jane have a boarder in their home. He's been with them for many years now. In fact, he joined their family soon after they were married.

Now I could never understand why a young married couple would want to take a third party into their home, but Jane assured me that he was no trouble at all. It seemed to me that they quite enjoyed having him in their home. He was usually very quiet, speaking only when asked to do so, and yet full of the most interesting stories that you could imagine. It was easy to spend a whole evening listening to him. He was very imaginative and certainly knew how to keep his audience spellbound.

As time passed, however, I couldn't help wondering if this boarder was such a good idea. Jane and Bill spent many evenings engrossed in his stories, which seemed to be so worldly. When I once mentioned this to Jane, she laughed at me and declared that I was 'too square'. After all, that's the way the world is, and what harm could it possibly do to hear about how the other side lives?

As time passed, Bill and Jane had a family, the same as we did. These were hectic times: the baby crying, dinner on the



stove, the other children fighting about toys. Would I remain sane? I must admit that I envied Jane, because she had it much easier. She had her wonderful boarder to help out, who kept the older children quiet and occupied. The stories he told them were totally enthralling, and the children would sit on the floor listening in rapt attention. And Jane was convinced her children were learning so much from the boarder that they would be way ahead in school.

But I couldn't help feeling somewhat uneasy when I learned about some of the stories her children talked about. The boarder's stories seemed to be full of worldly ideas, broken families, children who didn't listen to their parents, homes that were full of materialistic things, dancing, movie-going, and rock music. There seemed to be hardly any mention of families praying together, going to church, and living godly lives.

In fact, it seemed to me that the boarder taught the children things that were in conflict with the very principles Bill and Jane were trying to teach their children. For they were certainly doing their best to bring them up in a Christian home: they were regular churchgoers, always had devotions at meal times, and sent their children to a Christian school. Yet they couldn't see that every night the boarder in his stories contradicted their Bible reading immediately after dinner.

As the children got older, the boarder's stories became increasingly more disturbing. Now that they were older, they needed more excitement to hold their attention. There were lots of bad guys (usually the heroes), car chases and killings, gangs and weird space monsters.

When I dared to mention to Jane that the boarder's stories were getting more and more opposed to the Biblical

message they were trying to teach their children, she thought I was too alarmist. The children, she said, could easily distinguish between reality and fantasy stories. And the fact that they constantly heard about murders and other forms of violence wouldn't desensitize them to God's command, 'Thou shalt not kill'.

"As the children got older, the boarder's stories became increasingly more disturbing."

When their children were teenagers, Bill and Jane were frequently away from home. But the boarder was there to look after them, and by now his stories were full of sexual overtones. The children weren't upset about nakedness, unmarried people sleeping together, or even homosexual relationships. After all, this was part of the reality of life, wasn't it?

But slowly a revelation was sinking into the minds of Bill and Jane. Their children were not turning out quite as they had expected. They didn't like the way their children dressed, the music they listened to, and the activities they participated in: movies, nightclubs and parties where alcohol and drugs were present. They had the dreadful suspicion that their children were participating in premarital sex and, above all, the children were not willing to listen to them. Curfews were ignored, and parental opinions were laughed at as being old-fashioned.

Bill and Jane were stunned. What could possibly have gone wrong? Hadn't they done their very best? Hadn't they always given a good example, had a Christian home life, gone faithfully to church, and sent their children to the right schools? It must be the fault of the teachers! Or the church isn't appealing enough! The minister is too dry and dull in his sermons! Maybe we've overdone it with religion, and the poor kids are sick of it by now.

It never occurred to them that the fault was present in their very own home: the boarder. All these years they had allowed him to do his thing. He had filled the minds

(Continued on page 14)

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of their children with ideas and values that were completely opposed to those the Bible teaches. For years he had fed them a diet of violence, sex, materialism, pleasure seeking and worldliness. But even now Bill and Jane deny that this had any effect on their children. After all, they had always understood that this was all

fantasy, and that their family lived differently in reality.

In fact, if you were to visit Bill and Jane's home today, you would probably find them sitting in front of their boarder still, watching him do his stuff. As for the children, they'll grow out of it. All those

years of teaching have to have some effect, don't they?

Have you guessed who the boarder is? No? He is the television set in the lounge room!

Edited by Margret Lepke

We Live What We Learn!

There are many sayings that connect learning to living. A Catholic 'priest' once said to my husband, 'Give me a child until he is seven, and he will be mine forever.' Many years ago, in my pre-Christian past, I worked with clinical hypnotherapy to help people with psychosomatic illnesses. It was then that I first realised how powerfully the subconscious mind affects both physiological and psychological states and behaviours. Did you know that everything you see and hear in life gets stored? You might remember a night, where your mind kept processing your late night's mental work in your dreams. Or you watched a very impressive movie before going to bed, and your mind kept dwelling on it in a jumbled up way. And although we may not be able to consciously recall every single detail of our past, it is stored in our brains nonetheless.

Some information may even turn into a heavy burden: someone might have said 'you're hopeless' in an emotionally tense situation a long time ago, and because you believed it and took it on board, a feeling of failure has accompanied you ever since. Or you might have seen something at one time that later you couldn't get out of your head. Some images will never leave us, no matter how old we grow. Whatever we learn, whatever is allowed to enter our mind, it will subsequently affect our thoughts and behaviour in some small or large way. Counsellors work with their clients all the time to off-load this baggage and to renew the mind. Do you think that God pays attention to how much the things and people around us influence our thinking? He sure does, and he has quite a bit to say on the subject.

Proverbs 22: 6 for example, promises the following: **"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."** This verse is very interesting. The Hebrew idea of training includes three different concepts: (1) dedication to God – considering the child as belonging to God and taking up stewardship for it; (2) instruction – causing the child to learn everything essential in pleasing God; and (3) motivation – creating a desire within the child, so that he/she is internally motivated (not externally constrained!) to do what God wants him/her to do. A not so well known fact is that several different Hebrew words are translated with the one English word child, and that in this case a better translation would be "dependant." This stretches the age limit quite considerably, meaning that as long as a young person lives with his/her parents, he/she is to be the recipient of training, regardless of age. But this training by no means equates to harsh and legalistic prohibitions; rather, it should create and nurture a positive motivation to engage in godly activities.

The content of training is also important—in the way that he/she

should go. Remember Bill and Jane's children in the previous article? They were trained in two opposing ways: they had the freedom to taste and experience those things they were told NOT to do. No wonder that they chose to follow the worldly path. Children who live with double standards will often choose the lower one. The Israelites, on the other hand, were told by God to teach His law to their children through everyday life experiences: **"You shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land"** (Deuteronomy 11:18-21).

And finally, there is the promise that when the dependant becomes independent, he/she will keep walking in the same godly direction. Having brought up two children, who are now in their mid twenties and actively walking with the Lord, I know how difficult it is to keep them from worldly influences. We have often been accused of sheltering our children too much, to which my husband had a standard reply: 'Do I need to give them heroin in order for them to understand how bad it is?' Nonetheless, there was many a time when I felt like throwing up my hands and giving up. But the stakes are too high; we can't afford to give up! We need to inspire our children to develop a godly view of themselves and the world around them, and to see themselves as the person God has created for His purpose. Only then can they treat others likewise. I will leave you with two of my favourite verses, to which I have clung often during trying times, and pray that your own journey will be a successful one:

"I beseech you therefore...by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.."

"Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

Romans 12:1-2

Philippians 4:8.

(Scripture references NKJV)

By Margret Lepke



Thoughts on Children.

Children follow what you do—not what you say!

Love your children unconditionally and affectionately!

Enjoy your children's company while they are still young!

Our children are on loan from God so go to Him for instructions on how to raise them!

Put your child on your knee and tell them about Jesus

...because they won't hear about Him at any other joint!

Parents hold their children's hands for a little while...their hearts forever...

By Priscilla Gaston

RECIPES ... FOR GOOD HEALTH ...

APRICOT & BANANA JAFFLES

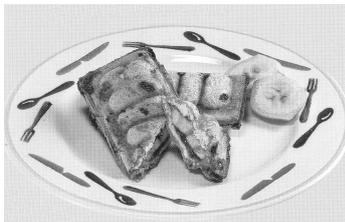
Serves 2

- 4 teaspoons apricot fruit spread
- 1/4 cup Australian Ricotta Cheese
- 4 slices raisin or fruit bread
- 1 banana, sliced
- Cinnamon, for sprinkling

Combine fruit spread and Ricotta and spread over 2 slices of bread. Top with banana, sprinkle with cinnamon and top with remaining slice of bread. Cook in a sandwich maker until toasted and warmed through.

NOTE: Alternatively toast on both sides under a grill until golden.

Nutrient analysis per serve:
Energy: **1334kj** Protein: **10g**
Fat: **6g** Carbohydrate: **57g**
Calcium: **104mg** Total Sugars:
31g



VEGETABLE DIM SIMS

Serves 10

- 1 tablespoon low salt soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon cornflour
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 carrot, grated

- 1/2 cup finely chopped cabbage
- 2 spring onions, chopped
- 1/2 cup beanshoots, chopped
- 1/2 cup grated Australian Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese
- 1 x 250g packet wonton wrappers
- Low salt soy sauce, extra for serving

Combine soy sauce, cornflour and ginger together and mix in carrot, cabbage, onion, beanshoots and cheese. Place a tablespoon of mixture into the centre of each wonton wrapper, brush edges with water, bring all corners in together and twist. Repeat with remaining mixture. Place Dim Sims in a shallow pan with enough boiling water to cover and simmer for 3-4 minutes or until tender. Drain and serve with extra soy sauce.

NOTE: To prevent wrappers from drying out, make sure they are kept covered with a damp tea-towel.

NOTE: Dim Sims are suitable to freeze.

Nutrient analysis per serve:
Energy: **253kj** Protein: **4g**
Fat: **2g** Carbohydrate: **8g**
Calcium: Total Sugars:



Have you got a favourite recipe to share?

Please post or email to us at the address on the back page.



Dealing With Many Roles



My Prayer For You

Where the ♥ is place your name and be blessed

*O Lord, You have examined ♥'s heart,
and know everything about her.
You know when ♥ sits or stands.
When far away You know her every thought.
You chart the path ahead of ♥
And tell her where to stop and rest.
Every moment You know where ♥ is.
You know what ♥ is going to say
even before she says it.
You both precede and follow her, and place Your hand of blessing on her head.
This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe!*

*♥ can never be lost to Your Spirit!
♥ can never get away from her God!
You made all the delicate, inner parts of her body,
and knit them together in her mother's womb.
Thank You for making her so wonderfully complex!
It is amazing to think about!
Your workmanship is marvellous...and well she knows it.
You were there while ♥ was being formed in utter seclusion!*

*You saw ♥ before she began to breathe...
Every day is recorded in Your Book!
How precious it is Lord to realize that You are thinking about ♥ constantly!
♥ can't even count how many times a day Your thoughts turn toward her.
And when ♥ awakens in the morning
YOU ARE STILL THINKING OF HER!!!
*Psalm 139:1-18**

The Challenge of Balancing Our Roles!

How do you avoid being sometimes overwhelmed by your many and varied roles? There's homemaker, wife and mother, possibly the major roles most women have. How about worker, daughter, friend, Church member? The list goes on...neighbour, mentor, grandmother, teenager, citizen.

There's an important one I've left out. The role of Christian ... a Christ-one? Oh, I fall dismally short of my expectations in that category. I'm talking not so much about living as a Christian in a world where God and Godly values have been (mostly) relegated to the backburner; I'm talking about maintaining a close and personal relationship with God my Father and Christ my Saviour and Lord.

From my marriage and other important relationships in my life, I know that a relationship will stagnate if I do not put effort and time into it. With time and effort both parties to a relationship flourish. I also grow as a person because, as a woman, I am relationship-oriented. I need to spend time with my husband and individual friends to nourish my soul.

How do you and I feel when we feel ourselves being pulled in many directions, trying to be "all things to all people"? If my life is not in balance, I find that physically, emotionally and spiritually I "fall short"...I don't cope so well. What I also find is that I over-react...perhaps to some words my husband says. It may be something another driver does that upsets me, or perhaps having to stop at a red light because I'm in a hurry. All areas of my life seem misaligned...and I feel that I cannot cope. I become teary, feeling out of

control, conscious of what I have to do that day and totally failing to recall the many things I may have done! Does that sound familiar?!

So how do we cope? Usually when I feel overwhelmed my relationship with the Lord is not right so I need to go spend time with Him. I need to re-acquaint myself with His immeasurable love for me. Not only is this time comforting and reassuring for me, it also helps me to re-set my priorities in the light of God's love. (I find that I can say 'no' if appropriate.)

God has made each of us beautifully and intricately different. Take a moment now to read aloud Psalm 139 and then praise God for making you so wonderfully. How often do we judge ourselves or our accomplishments by another's, rather than appreciating that God has custom-made us for His purpose? Are we denying His creativity by finding ourselves lacking?

There's a short passage in Acts Chapter 9 about a lady named Tabitha or "Dorcas" in Greek. It's a lovely passage and we are told that Dorcas means "deer" or "gazelle". A deer always seems to me such a graceful, delicate animal that is fleet of foot. But my mind also goes to Psalm 42:1-2 which sings to the Lord, **"As the deer gets thirsty for streams of water, I am really thirsty for you, my God. In my heart, I am thirsty for you, the living God. When will I see your face?"** What a beautiful picture...for my soul to thirst to know God as much as a deer thirsts for water.

In Joppa Dorcas was renowned for her sewing. Verse 36 tells us that she "was always doing good things for people and had given much to the poor". In response to her relationship to seek after the Lord, Dorcas reached out and did good things for others. It was her signature role for which she was known in her community.

Then Dorcas grew sick and died. Her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. But the believers heard that the Apostle Peter was nearby in Lydda and sent two men to bring him back to Joppa.

Peter came to Joppa immediately with the men who took him to the room where Dorcas lay. In accordance with the custom people were with Dorcas' body, mourning her death. "Many widows were there crying. They showed him the coats and clothes that Dorcas had made while she was still alive." (v39). During her lifetime Dorcas left tangible reminders of her love for her Lord and goodness to others. Her faith was active and

others saw and benefited from it.

Peter sent everyone out of the room and, alone with Dorcas' body, he knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up!" She opened her eyes and sat up (v40).

No doubt there was great excitement as Peter showed the other believers that Dorcas was raised from the dead. Dorcas was alive, only to physically die at a later time. But what was the eternal result? Everyone in Joppa heard and many put their faith in the Lord (v42). Can you imagine how quickly word spread? But as we know that God allows all things to work together for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28), so we know that the raising of Dorcas from the dead caused many to become believers.

Back to coping with our roles. Apart from God being first and (if we are married) our husbands coming second in our lives, our other priorities must be aligned with God's will for our lives. Dear Friend, regularly re-rank your priorities before the Lord. Accept an opportunity only after prayer and seeking the advice and support

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of your husband or close friend—they can be more objective and it is good to consider their opinion. It may also be that it is time to end a commitment—again, after seeking the Lord's will and trusted advice.

written by Ray Prince a number of years ago. What is 1440, you ask? "1440" is the number of minutes in each day. As you know, we are all allotted the same time each day which we can never re-use. None of us knows how many "1440s" we have left in our lives...but God knows.

live each day as a special blessing from our bountiful God.

"1440 is All You've Got" is a book

I challenge you—and myself—to view and

By Annette Lawson



A Mother's Creed

Lord, who am I to teach the way—
To little children, day by day,
So prone myself to go astray!
I teach them knowledge, but I know
How faint they flicker and how low—
The candles of my knowledge glow;
I teach them power to will and do,
But only now to learn anew—
My own great weakness through and through!
Lord, if their guide I still must be,
Oh let my little children see—
Their mother leaning hard on Thee.

By Priscilla Gaston

Loving Myself

The Great Commandment in the Law is ¹ **"to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind and the second is like it we should love our neighbour as we love ourselves"**.

When I was growing up, if we said he/she 'loved themselves', we meant that they were conceited and self-centred.

So then, how can we **love ourselves the way God wants us to love ourselves**? If I don't know how to love myself, how will I know how to love my neighbour? If I try to analyse the word love I find that to love is to care. I care for myself. When I'm hungry, I eat, when I'm thirsty, I drink, when I'm cold I dress warmly and in the heat of the day, a cool breeze is wonderful! That is caring for my body.

Now what about caring for my mind? After all, it is part of me! In fact it could be called **the citadel, the fortress of our being**. Everything seen, heard and felt is processed in my mind. I can accept it or reject it right there. From my mind it lodges in my heart whether good or otherwise, and comes out in my daily walk, in what I do and what I say. No wonder the Bible says that we are to ² **"keep our hearts with all diligence, (above all keeping, as with a garrison) for out of it spring the issues of life."**

If I love myself, I will care about what I take into my mind and heart. To love my neighbour as myself, I must first love myself. When I care for my neighbours, I care for their well-being. "That's all very well," I can hear you say, "you don't know my neighbour. He's loud-mouthed, disagreeable and cruel."

So what do you do? Pay him back in his own coin? God's commandment for us is to, ³ **"treat others exactly as we would like them to treat us" "and as far as it is possible, depending on us, we are to live peaceably with all men."**

We are not promised that it will be easy, but we have our orders from above and those orders are clear. We are to love our neighbour as ourselves.

On our own it is impossible, so let us always remember that the Lord Jesus said that without Him we can do nothing. If we don't seek His counsel, help and guidance, (in this as in everything else), we will fail.

There is a very solemn warning in Isaiah 50:10 and 11, for those who don't trust God or rely on Him, but insist on doing things their way. **"They will have to suffer the consequences of their own actions and they will lie down in sorrow."**

We are exhorted ⁴ **"not to grow weary doing good, because it will bear fruit in due season, if we don't lose heart."** We must remember that our enemy, the devil, wants us to become disheartened and give up, but God is in charge. Let us trust Him more!

All this brings us back to the Great Commandment ¹ **"to love our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and the second, to love our neighbour as we love ourselves."** The Lord Jesus said that if we love Him, we must keep His Commandments. After which we read the profound statement ⁵ **"that on those two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets"**. The key word is Love. We are told in Romans 13:10 that the reason that these two commandments fulfil the Law is because love does no harm to a neighbour. How different our world would be if each and every one of us would, with God's help, obey these two commandments.

¹ Matthew 22:37-39

² Proverbs 4:23

³ (Luke 6:31, Romans 12:18)

⁴ Galatians 6:9

⁵ Matthew 22:40 (NKJV)



By Barbara Holmes

Your life will be richer ... IF



On this day, you make an effort to: mend a quarrel.

Search for a forgotten friend.

Dismiss a suspicion and replace it with trust.

Write a letter to someone who misses you.

Encourage someone who has lost faith.

Keep a promise.

Forget an old grudge.

Examine your demands on others, and vow to reduce them.

Fight for a principle.

Express your gratitude.

Overcome an old fear.

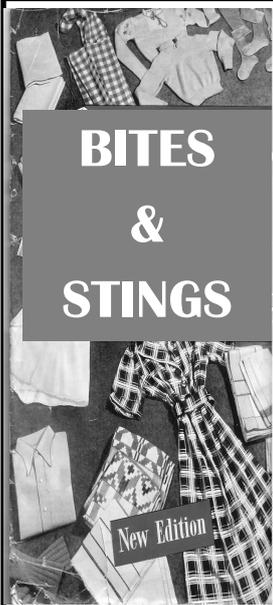
Take two minutes to appreciate the beauty of nature.

Tell someone you love them.

Tell them again—and again—and again.



By Priscilla Gaston



Red-back spider

Apply icepacks to the bite to relieve pain, but do not restrict the poison. Calmly take patient and spider (in a bottle) to hospital.

Ticks.

Do not try to pull out a tick. Apply kerosene or turpentine and leave for 30 minutes. If it has not been dislodged by then, seek medical attention. If it has, make sure it has all come out. Wash and apply antiseptic.

Blisters.

A week before you start walking, running, or wearing new shoes, rub feet well with methylated spirits each day.

I Believe—that we don't have to change friends if we understand that friends change.
I Believe—that true friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance.
I Believe—that my best friend and I can do anything or nothing and have the best time.
I Believe—that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to, doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.
I Believe—that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

Dealing With Our Belief Systems

My Personal Testimony

Before going further, I want to say to my family (for I know they will read this), by writing about this aspect of my life – there is no intention of causing anyone pain, guilt or any other negative emotions. We all have surrounded the same family tree of life and as such each have a separate section of bark to view and remember. This then is simply a tiny speck of my section of bark. The one of many our Lord has allowed me to view in order that I might know Him.

I want to also express to all who read this, that I greatly loved and respected my parents. They too were products of their upbringing and I believe as such, they did the best they could. It is my belief that they truly loved us – made mistakes at times (as we all do), but strove to bring us up the only way they could. I hold no bitterness or resentment toward them. My desire is to bless and not to curse.

I am the youngest child of four, born to a couple that came from very different lives. There is exactly five years and one week between the eldest and myself. My great grandmother on Mum's side had no maternal instincts and if it had not been for her eldest son Fred, all nine children would have starved. Her husband was an arrogant, proud man, who was at one stage very rich, being the Government tinsmith. He was known to sit on his verandah and proudly run golden coins through his fingers so that passers-by would know of his wealth. However this was all to change and there came a time when he became an extremely bad alcoholic and spent his wealth on drink. We were told he

sold most of their possessions also for the same addiction. He wasn't there for the children either and so my grandmother grew up not really knowing what parental love was or how to express it. We often laugh at her prudishness, but also my speck of bark showed her as unforgiving and self-centred at times. I don't think any of us ever received a birthday card from Grandma – but then again neither did any of my mother's generation receive one from great-grandmother either.



course had that right, but grandparents and an Aunt and Uncle who also lived within the same block, also enjoyed this same privilege. Then of course so did my brothers and sister. I recall one of my teachers asking Mum, "Is she always so argumentative?" Of course Mum answered in the affirmative and then never ceased to remind me of the incident. To me, I thought I was just asking "Why?" or standing up for others and/or myself – you see, a strong sense of justice is also part of my personality.

I never did have a lot of confidence, so if I felt I had at last achieved something; I remember going to Mum to show her what I had done—only to be sternly told, "You should never be proud!!"

Our family was busy, intense, loud and argumentative. It is very possible that all four of us were driven by the same desire – a deep desire to be needed and loved. Dad was never home and when he was the arguments were constant and crescendoed at meal times. Mum, due to lack of money, had to go to work when I was nine. She never stopped working – day and night often till late in the night to achieve the mending, ironing and other household jobs she could not do during working hours. To stop for a kind word or a gentle cuddle was not done – or not to my memory at least. She showed her love by looking after us, feeding and clothing us. I know my Dad, who craved for physical touch felt this pain also, however Mum did too. After his

On Dad's side – Grandma and Grandpa were right next-door. Our memories of home life were surrounded always by their presence, love and support. However their presence also made it extremely hard for

**"A little girl with a little curl
right in the middle of her
forehead,**

**And when she was good –
she was very, very good,**

**But when she was bad she
was horrid!"**

Strong willed and rebellious, one of my pet hates was being bossed about, so with family surrounding us, I felt everyone did just that. Mum and Dad of

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death she expressed her deep sorrow about not being able to tell him or show him physically how much she loved him. So naturally we children also felt this deep loss of affection.

My tiny speck also revealed to me a constant barrage of comments such as "Wendy is dumb, she will never achieve..." "I really don't know what will become of you!" "Wendy I'm very disappointed in your marks, I don't think you even try!" "The only nurse you'll make my girl is a dirty nurse!" I was teased and tormented beyond fun—it was cruel. One brother in writing of his tiny speck of bark says, "We were devils!" - and so they were. However now I tend to look back and think 'maybe it was their self-centred way of trying to say -"I love you"'. Mind you my driven passion to be loved did not help, but in fact opened many doors for their ability to tease and torment to this degree.

The world would say—"I grew up with a very low self-esteem." When I first met my husband, he spent a lot of time telling me I was just as good as any else. At times even now—he has to help me correct my thought patterns—usually when I'm tired or have been hurt emotionally by something or someone. When this happens now my self-love causes me to withdraw as a form of protection. Without the knowledge of God's love and forgiveness for me, I could not forgive and love others and

would therefore easily lean towards becoming a hermit.

It was when I opened my heart to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that I began to view myself differently. I believe I knew of Him and I loved God to the depth of my ability, but there did come a time in my life when I recognized that this was not enough. I needed to forget about my self-love (the one that protected me), and step out in an unknown field—a place of faith. It was then that God showed me my true worth. To Him I was special, important, needed and loved. So much so that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to tell me personally of His great love. Jesus revealed His love as I read the Scriptures for myself and saw His death, burial and resurrection specifically for me. I truly realized that if I had been the only person on this earth, Jesus Christ would still have done what He did—because He saw me as having great worth and very precious.

Many years down the track, my brothers and sister have said, "it is good that Wendy has achieved so much!" This is kind and I thank them, but truly I have to express before God and man, I have no confidence in my abilities and take no glory in my achievements. Like Paul I believe with all my heart: -

¹ "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

² "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

³ "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; that, according as it is written, 'he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.'"

¹ Philippians 4:13

² Ephesians 2:10

³ 1 Corinthians 1:27-31

By Wendy Davie



The Passing of Mr Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Mr Common Sense. Mr Sense had been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated valuable lessons such as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm and that life isn't always fair. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge). His health began to rapidly deteriorate when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Mr Sense declined even

further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student; but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion. Finally, Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot; she spilled a bit in her lap, and was awarded a huge financial settlement. Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. Two stepbrothers, My Rights and Ima Whiner survive him! Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on; if not, join the majority and do nothing.

Anonymous



God is Love

but lasts forever? This love is God. He only is fully patient and kind. He does not ever envy, nor boast and is not proud for He has no need. God is not rude, never self-seeking nor easily angered. He keeps no record of wrongs and doesn't delight in evil. God rejoices with the truth. He always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres. "For God IS love." 1 John 4:8b

"God is love. Whoever lives in God and God in him...we love because He first loved us."

1 John 4:16b, 19

God's love—who could ever hope to even broach such a noble theme, let alone begin to plumb its depths or scale its heights? The fact is we each depend on His love for our very birth and being. Our every breath is from His loving hand. With His sacrificial love He bought our salvation; so our spiritual life is as dependent on His love as is our physical life. How can a better appreciation of God's love help us understand our own value and serve those around us? Let's examine Paul's famous love chapter in 1 Corinthians 13 to help us in our quest.

The Most Excellent Way!

Through Paul's letter to the Corinthian church (chapter 13), God says to us that love—both having it and showing it, is superior to all. It is the most excellent way to live (ch12v31). It is eternal (v13) and of all the graces of God in us, it is the greatest. If everything else in this world vanished and only love remained it would be enough. Love stands alone. In fact a world without love is an unimaginable hell.

The previous chapter in Corinthians (chapter 12) teaches us about spiritual gifts and how we are each gifted differently and uniquely; for the purpose of fitting together and working as part of the church family or body. The ideas of mutual service and of unity are emphasized. As important as these great themes are, Paul goes on to say that love is the most excellent way. Furthermore he contends that it is possible to be gifted in tongues and teaching (v1) or prophecy and knowledge (v2) or faith and helps or even at the wildest extreme to give our life for the gospel (v3) and still not have love. By doing so we miss the whole point of God's gifts toward us in the first place. God has us where He wants us when we have His love and give it out. So the very gifts He gives are to be used for the help and benefit of our fellow Christians, not for our own glory. The gift He gives us is the same gift we in turn lovingly give to others.

This Love is God

What is this love that is more important than life, stronger than death? What is this love that never runs out or fades away

Ask yourself, "Do I really believe that He is all these things, all of the time?" For it is only as we come to experience and enjoy God as the great Lover that we can even begin to "have love". We cannot give love we do not have. It is from the measure of the fullness of how much we have God (and therefore love) that we can in turn give out to others. Having God, having His love transforms the way we see others and ourselves. We are able to look at life afresh through the lens of love.

"If I have not love...I am nothing."

Hard words but true! Speaking out God's truth in (v2). We may examine ourselves here; "Does the sumtotal of me, my worth, my value really equate to zero? Could it be that I don't have God's love; that somehow its passage into me or out of me is blocked? Am I really 'getting' God's love—am I soaked in it, receiving it to the full, experiencing His overwhelming desire towards me?"

Here is a paraphrase of just a few Bible passages, which remind us of God's love.

"Your love to me O LORD reaches to the heavens. How priceless is Your unfailing love towards me. Please continue Your love to me because I know You. You are my strength—I sing praise to You, You O God are my fortress, my loving God. You are faithful to all Your promises and loving towards all You have made. You made me so You love me. More than this: how great is the love You O Father have lavished on me; that I should be called Your child! And this is what I am! You have loved me with an everlasting love;

You have drawn me with loving-kindness."

Our Real Worth

As we begin to know and experience and appreciate God's love at constant work in our lives, this must motivate us to share His love with others. Our life has worth, real worth when we finally agree with God and come to understand how much He

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loves us, accepting and enjoying His favour and then finding ways to channel that love outwards. Life is relationship: God's relationship with us and ours with others. There is nothing of eternal value to be gained in this life without love. If I "have not love, I gain nothing" (v3). The converse must also be true—if I have love, I gain everything!

Let us never be tempted to undervalue the importance of the work of God's love in firmly establishing the knowledge of our true self-worth. As the rays of His love dawn on our souls, warming us with His grace and loving-kindness and mercy, may we then be motivated to share that love that makes us patient

and kind and long-suffering and humble and sacrificial and mild-mannered and truthful and trustful and hopeful and protective.

Jesus said, "A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples: if you love one another."

John 13:34, 35



By Liz Lennox

DEAR LITTLE SPARROW.

By Glenda Rosser

Why do I feel discouraged?

Why do I feel all blue?

When I know my heavenly Father

Is watching over you?

I know He cares for you and me,

Of this I am so sure,

And I know He loves us little birds,

In Him we are secure.

But little sparrow...

Sometimes I murmur and complain,

And sometimes I even fret,

But—you always seem so happy!

You never seem to forget—

That your heavenly Father watches over you...

So—Why should I?

Wrong Philosophies versus Christianity

Author Unknown

Throughout history all of the great philosophies have opposed the teachings of Christianity:

Greece said, "Be wise, '**know yourself!**'"

Rome said, "Be strong, '**discipline yourself!**'"

Religion says, "Be good, '**conform yourself!**'"

Epicureanism says, "Be sensuous, '**enjoy yourself!**'"

Education says, "Be resourceful, '**expand yourself!**'"

Asceticism says, "Be lowly, '**suppress yourself!**'"

Psychology says, "Be confident, '**assert yourself!**'"

Materialism says, "Be satisfied, '**please yourself!**'"

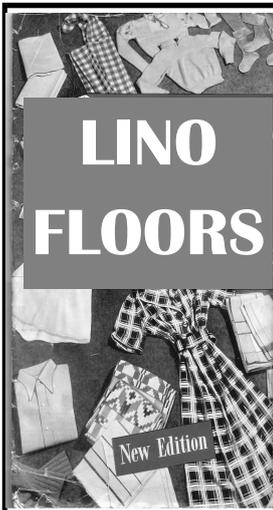
Pride says, "Be superior, '**promote yourself!**'"

Humanism says, "Be capable, '**believe in yourself!**'"

Legalism says, "Be pious, '**limit yourself!**'"

Philanthropy says, "Be generous, '**release yourself!**'"

Jesus says, "Be a servant of God, '**SERVE OTHERS!**'"



To spruce up old lino.

1 part turpentine. 2 parts olive oil.

Dip a soft cloth in this (well shaken) mixture and rub over old linoleum.

To remove brown marks or shoe polish.

Kerosene. Steel wool. Detergent.

Rub marks, then wash with detergent.

To remove crayon.

Rub marks well with *silver metal polish.*

Stubborn marks.

Rub lino with steel wool and kerosene, then clean with floor polish.

Dealing With Out Pride

Their hearts were breaking -

But God was in the mending business!

The years had progressed reasonably happily. Although Julia and Warren had faced ups and downs as most married folks do, they could honestly say they loved each other deeply and could not envisage life without each other. However now as they were beginning to feel their age something seemed awfully wrong. Warren began thinking he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't. Julia had begun to feel as if Warren no longer loved her. She hated looking in the mirror even to comb her hair. Where as a young woman, she knew why Warren was attracted to her, (after all everyone knew what men liked and she was slim and reasonably attractive), now she could see no rhyme nor reason as to why he would want an overweight, wrinkly old lady beside him. At the same time she often watched him work and in spite of admiring little aspects about him, she also saw that his outward manliness was not up to scratch either. Somehow though he never seemed nearly as bad as she was. To make matters worse their health was failing, leaving them often tired and frustrated. Yet their minds were still young at heart and this too was a frustration. Due to hearing loss, communication was at times difficult, but daily they lived and worked in peace, thinking only off and on of the difficulty of ageing.

Then it happened. Neither really understood how it came about, but as they were about to retire for the night all these niggles surfaced and

before they knew it, they were both hurting and withdrawing emotionally from each other. The thought came to Julia 'not to let the sun go down upon their wrath' and so she quieted her heart and strove to say she was sorry. They prayed and kissed each other good night, but as Warren turned and quickly slipped into sleep, she arose from their marital bed and left the room.

No sooner had she sat in her plush velvet chair she loved so much, than the sobs came. How glad she was that Warren's deafness would keep her secret of sorrow. Quietly in the cold of the night she sat trying to talk to God. Every now and then the temptation came over her to go into the spare room and sleep there, but she quickly put that out of her mind – she was not going to open another door to their difficulties. After some time, she went back to bed and it was then she knew the Lord's presence with her. She felt Him say to her heart, "forgive yourself and Warren – look to me, love me and I will restore your love for Warren." Thoughts of her original feelings towards Warren during the very early months of their marriage drifted into her mind and as she quickly and surprisingly slipped into sleep, God's presence gave her the forgiving and loving heart that was needed.

Her night though was fitful and full of dreams. Some frightening, some purely

strange. Each time she woke, Julia was aware she was still praying, but she also sensed a sorrow and grief that disturbed her.

Early the next morning she awoke to find Warren lying there stiffly beside her. Their 'good morning' to each other revealed a coldness and pain that still remained – they needed to talk and work it out. Warren said he felt empty; Julia cried softly and admitted to him that she felt unloved. However in time, they were able to draw their emotions closer and their deep love for each other, overcame their hurt feelings and pain. It was clear they needed to work more at communication. They both knew their busy life was taking its toll. Julia decided to work on losing weight. This helped, however she soon realized the old adage – 'beauty is only skin deep' was very true. Due to the pace of each day, her personal devotions had begun to slip and her prayer life had become quite unsatisfactory. She was unable to join a 'ladies Bible study', so she began to do one on her own at home. To help her prayer life she also went back to her old habit of journaling. Before too long, both Warren and Julia noted a big difference. Peace indwelt them



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both, the emptiness he felt had lifted and Julia began to see how much God loved her.

After some time Julia became aware of a different emotion. She had always striven to be loved and accepted. She had had great compassion towards those who sorrowed and memories of her reaching out to them in comfort told her a little of her personality and why at times she had found herself in difficult situations. Now though she began to see Warren in a different light also. As she sought God's guidance and talked matters over with her husband, she noticed a deep sense of grace and love toward her. God was showing her how much she was worth through the physical presence of her husband. It was then that in prayer one day He spoke to her heart. "My dear child," He said, "the reason you sorrowed and grieved so long ago, was because an earthly marriage symbolises the fact that as my daughter you are part of the Bride of Christ. To be at one with each other is of great importance. When you seek your own selfish thoughts and ways, it not only separates you emotionally from Warren, but it also separates you from my presence. Learn to put aside your own desires and strive to bless your husband and to depend upon my daily guidance. My Holy Spirit is there to comfort and guide – listen to Him." How precious she

felt to the Almighty and from this day forth she would walk in His ways.

The Need For Human Touch

A Professor once expressed his deep belief in the importance of touching. He asked for a married couple as volunteers. Seating them back-to-back, he suggested they begin an argument. Before long, they were becoming so hurtful to each other that he deemed it wise to bring it to a halt and counsel them to remember it was only an experiment, so therefore to forgive each other and begin again. He then sat them facing each other, but not close enough so they could touch. Once again they were asked to begin an argument, but this time they were not to divert their eyes from each other. They found it harder, but this too ended in a bad way. After the necessary time needed for forgiving and starting over, he then placed the chairs close enough so that their legs intertwined and they were told to hold hands. "Now," said he, "start arguing." There was quietness for some time and the audience noticed their fingers stroking each other's hands and their legs gently resting against each other. After a moment or two, the husband came out with one of his gripes – the wife looked lovingly at him, he tried again, she went to withdraw her hand, but could not. Then she tried, but by now his thoughts had begun to wander also and eventually after numbers of efforts they both burst into laughter letting go of

their hands only long enough to simultaneously stand and cuddle each other thoroughly.

The Professor once again assured his audience of the need for touching! "Gently and constantly affirming your love in this way will break down many walls of separation", he said. "It is almost impossible to argue whilst holding hands and it is in kindness and love that we know our true worth and are therefore able to pass it on to our loved ones."

Consider This -

Love is subjective—
because of how I feel!

Love is objective—
in how others express it to me!

We can therefore only understand true love as we accept by faith (not feelings) the truth of God's Word.

By trusting in our feelings are we really saying in our hearts that the Bible is not true?

By Wendy Davie

I Believe—that you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.

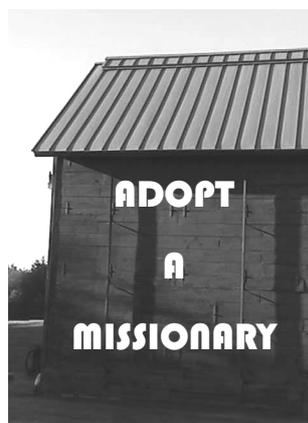
I Believe—that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I Believe—that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I Believe—that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

I Believe—that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

I Believe—that even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.



PLEASE HELP!!

The Heart of a Woman is sent to a number of missionaries and we know many more could benefit. This is where you come in! Would you and/or your family Adopt-a-Missionary? Adopt-a-Missionary is a \$20 annual investment. This covers the annual printing and postage costs for *The Heart of a Woman* to be sent to a missionary overseas.

MISSIONARIES ARE WAITING!!

Please contact us at the address on the back page.

A LITTLE BIT OF WHITE

Matilda Magpie glided down to the outer wire of the clothes hoist and, lifting her beak high, poured out a symphonic warble of joy to greet the early morning. Her wings gleamed black in the early morning sunlight and the breeze ruffled her feathers.

'What's so good about her?' grumbled Crumpus Crow from his high perch above her on the Box Gum branch. 'My feathers gleam as hers do. Looking from the outside, we're exactly the same.' He paused and preened his feathers with his long beak, looking behind him casually to check where Mrs. Willy Wagtail was. 'Thinks she's so smart, flying down on the clothesline, close to the house. As if the humans won't notice her and shoot.'

He had been watching the drum for days now. Eggs were his weakness. The chooks in the henhouse weren't laying so well lately. The 7.00 am egg had been collected each morning before he could get it. But, each morning, the roaming white hen pecked her way round the cow yard, nonchalantly bypassing the cattle dogs and laid her egg in the drum right next to the clothesline.

Crumpus Crow was glad that Matilda Magpie had chosen today to visit the Garden. Yes, the human was watching. This would be the safety test. Strange though, the human was smiling. Matilda Magpie played her tune again and moved on. Crumpus failed to see the flashing zigzags of white on her under feathers. She had missed the egg, silly bird. Six of them, all sitting neatly in that drum, just waiting to be eaten, if Bogey, the cattle dog didn't discover them. He hadn't rushed at Matilda with his troublesome barking, so this side of the yard was safe.

'Caw, caw, caw.' The thought of those eggs overwhelmed him. He would land right where Matilda had been. He would sing as she had. That was all he needed to fool the human. Those eggs were his. He flew down to the outer line of the clothes hoist. His wings gleamed black in the early morning sunlight and the breeze ruffled his feathers. He lifted his beak proudly high to pour out the song. 'Caw, caw, caw.' He sensed the danger and flapped his wings upwards as the boom of the 410 sounded and Bogey the cattle dog rushed out in that flurry of barking he saved for the crows. The Box Gum branch swayed as he landed.

'What are you trying to do Crumpus Crow? Die young?' It was Mrs. Willy Wagtail, interfering as usual. 'Matilda Magpie got away with it, so I thought I'd try. It's a free garden isn't it?' As if to mock him, Matilda Magpie's symphony of joy poured out of the high branch reaching over the shed and he heard her flapping her wings with pleasure as she leaped from branch to branch.

'Crumpus Crow, you can't sing as she does. You may look the same on the outside, but you've missed a very important detail. Look carefully, Crumpus. Can't you see the flashes of white underneath? It's the white that makes all the difference. You may look the same on the outside, but that's all. There's no way you can put the white there.' Chirruping bossily Mrs. Willy Wagtail rounded up her husband and two children and flew down to peck grain from the feed troughs. 'Only God can do that!' She flung at him from below.

Crumpus Crow flew away to the tank above the chook pen. He would just have to wait in turn for a scrap from the yard after the hens had had their fill.

We are very like Crumpus Crow. We go through life looking for ways to satisfy our desires, cawing out an empty song. From God's view, our hearts are black with sin and like Crumpus; we can't put the white on. But God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross so that we could be made clean from our sins. The Lord Jesus can wash our hearts clean from sin. He alone makes us white as snow inside. When He does so, a song of joy pours from our hearts as His Holy Spirit changes us from the inside. Crumpus Crow thought he could sing differently by concentrating and posing correctly, we foolishly do the same. We cannot change our song, but God can give us a new song. It's the white that makes all the difference. Crumpus Crow thought he could fool the humans because he looked the same as Matilda on the outside. We foolishly think we can fool God by trying to act the right way. But God sees right through all pretence.

"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow."

Isaiah 1:18

"Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

Psalms 51:7

"He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to my God."

Psalms 40:3

By Jane Cruickshank

Israel

A Backsliding Nation

The Historical Background of the Book of Malachi

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. The man Malachi was the last of the Old Testament prophets and he was the last of the post-exilic prophets. (That is, his time of prophecy came after the children of Israel had spent 70 years in exile in Babylon for disobedience to God.)

In the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, and as a fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah the prophet, God spoke to the king about sending the children of Israel back to their homeland. They were to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. All the precious gold and silver taken into captivity was to be returned with them and many Israelites, including Ezra the priest who had a desire to do so, willingly and joyfully returned.

However between the end of their exile and Malachi's prophecy much had happened. Ezra the priest, was a wonderful godly man and a trusted scribe, who was renowned for prayer and worship. At some point of time his heart was breaking over the condition of

Jerusalem and so we are told he went up to Babylon and obtained permission from king Artaxerxes the 1st in 458 BC, to take a number of the people back to Jerusalem. This remnant began the rebuilding of the temple, however due to the fact that many enemies surrounded them and no protection was given, they became sidetracked and instead overcome with discouragement, they ceased their work. God was in control though and eventually the work began again. With the final completion of the temple they celebrated the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The book of Ezra closes with confession by the people and a determination to walk in righteousness. A great revival had begun, however when Ezra had returned to Babylon to gather more Jews including some Levites or Priests, the people once again began to falter in their walk with God.

Many years passed, and unfortunately life continued in this decline, so at some point in time a message was sent to Nehemiah who was the king's cupbearer telling him of the deplorable condition of the people in the land of his fathers. It caused him to sit and weep in great sorrow. Now Nehemiah was a man of great prayer and dependence upon God, therefore we are shown how, casting his concerns upon God, he steps out and asks permission of the king to allow others and himself, to return to Jerusalem and to organize the rebuilding of the walls. At least this would stop the constant barrage of the enemies. His book tells us of the times of great troubles, but how they managed with God's guidance to complete this mammoth task. We are then told how Nehemiah and his brother Hanani, who had become the Governor at that time, supported by Ezra the Priest, then set about to once again restore the much needed religious forms. He does return to Babylon for a time however, but when he comes back again, once again he has

to set about new reforms, removing evil men from office and expelling ungodly people from the city. Both Ezra and Nehemiah expound the Word of God and under great conviction the people then set about celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles followed by the solemn fast, repentance and a prayer of humiliation and confession of sins.

Unfortunately many years later and just 400 years prior to the birth of Jesus, Malachi shows that within one or two generations the people had once again fallen into a terrible state. Oh the religious traditions were still in place; yes they were living in great comfort now with comfortable homes; and yes their wonderful and beautiful temple was still being thoroughly used, but their hearts had become indifferent and careless towards their God. Their outward expression of worship was simply hypocrisy as there was no reverence for God, no confession of their sin and certainly no repentance. Malachi speaks to the godly remnant who still want to serve the Lord faithfully and tell them of their coming Messiah, whilst the masses of people continue to follow their empty traditions. This then is what Jesus condemns later in the Gospels when He openly speaks woes towards the two sects the Pharisees and Sadducees. "When the blind lead the blind they will both fall into the pit!"

Comparisons to today

We are surrounded by enemies, anger and resentment, bitterness and hate run rife. There is no respect for God or His Holiness. We tend to view Him in our own image instead of the other way around. Folks tend to care more for animals than they do for their neighbours. A life of selfishness and pride is visible in all of us and often we continue in empty

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religious traditions with no confession of our sins and certainly no repentance. Prayer is spoken of, but seldom do we manage it or come across others who are known for their prayer and worship. Our family lives are mostly dysfunctional and sadly we often become closer to friends than family. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 3: 1-7 of our lives in this way: -

“Don’t be naïve. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed,

money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They’ll make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they’re animals. Stay clear of these people. These are the kind of people who smooth-talk themselves into the homes of unstable and needy women and take advantage of them,

women who, depressed by their sinfulness, take up with every new religious fad that calls itself ‘truth’. They get exploited every time and never really learn.”

(The Message)

By Ruth-Marie

When I Whine

Today, upon a bus, I saw a girl with golden hair
I looked at her and sighed and wished I was as fair.

When suddenly she rose to leave,

I saw her hobble down the aisle.

She had one leg and used a crutch

But as she passed, she passed a smile.

“Oh, God, forgive me when I whine”

I have two legs! The world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy

The lad who sold it had such charm

I talked with him a while, he seemed so very glad

If I were late, it’d do no harm.

And as I left, he said to me,

“I thank you, you’ve been so kind.

It’s nice to talk with folks like you.

You see,” he said, “I’m blind.”

“Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.”

I have two eyes! The world is mine.



Later while walking down the street,

I saw a child with eyes of blue

He stood and watched the others play

He did not know what to do.

I stopped a moment and then I said,

“Why don’t you join the others, dear?”

He looked ahead without a word.

And then I knew, he couldn’t hear.

“Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.”

I have two ears! The world is mine.

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With feet to take me where I’d go;

With eyes to see the sunset’s glow;

With ears to hear what I would know;

“Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.”

I’ve been blessed indeed: the world is mine!

Sorrow looks back,

Worry looks around,

Faith looks up.

With thanks to the unknown author



## Moments With Melissa



### **FORGIVING MYSELF, IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

All of us have done things in our past that we are ashamed of. Personally, I can think of many things I've said or done that later I was embarrassed about and regretted deeply. For the often silly things I've said or done I have chastised myself over and over again until I get to the point of asking God and others to forgive me. Sometimes after I have asked God to forgive me I keep on chastising myself.

Through many books I have read over the past year, I have learned quite a bit about forgiveness and how to forgive myself. How do we forgive ourselves? Do we have the right to forgive ourselves? Isn't forgiving about two? Doesn't there have to be someone who forgives and someone who gets forgiven? These questions and more run through my head when I think about forgiving myself. One of the most important things I have personally learned is that we can only forgive ourselves for things we have said or done, not for who we are. We have to accept who we are and forgive the things we have done, in the

light of God's forgiveness. This is not easy, as I have experienced. It takes time and most importantly it takes God. It is only through knowing God, reading His Word daily and spending quality time with Him, that we can learn from His example.

When I get overloaded with doubts and questions, I turn to God's Word and find out what He has to say. There is no greater rule book for life! The first verse that always comes to mind and is also a wonderful promise from God is *1 John 1:9*.

***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."***

So if God forgives us as soon as we confess our sin, feel genuine repentance and turn from our wicked ways; shouldn't we feel forgiven? I know that sometimes I don't! I don't feel deserving of God's grace! I feel I should be punished in some way! You see, I'm making up the terms and conditions of forgiveness, not God. This is when I have to stop and accept God's free gift. If God says we are forgiven, then we are forgiven. I have learned that forgiving myself is a process that needs repeating over and over again. Eventually, the

person staring back at me in the mirror has forgiven herself.

I want to finish off by reminding you of three great promises from God about forgiveness. This is how much God loves you, how much He has forgiven you.

***"As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."***

***Psalm 103:12***

***"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."***

***Isaiah 43:25***

***"For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more"***

***Jeremiah 31:34b***



By  
Melissa Walmsley

***Prayer*** is so often just a few words unspoken,  
Whispered in tears by the heart that is broken...

For God is already deeply aware  
Of the burdens we find too heavy to bear!



# A Personal Testimony

Shock—confusion—  
profound loss—  
heartbreak—frustration—  
disbelief and anger.

These are some of the feelings people experience when they lose a loved one. We feel numbness in the following days and weeks that is unique to each one of us, depending on our circumstances. Memories both good and not so good come flooding back to our minds. Hopefully through our tears, we can see God waiting there to hold us in His arms and comfort us with His peace and love.

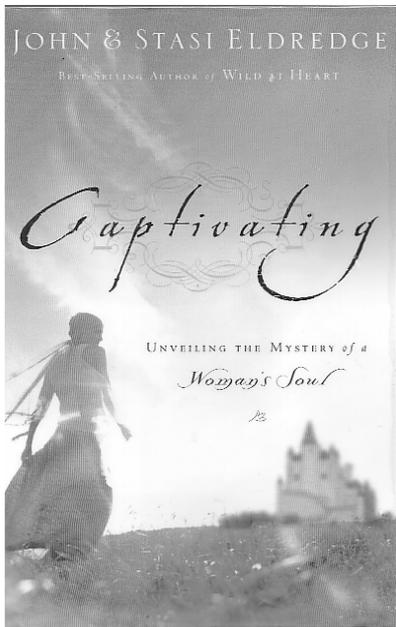
I have felt three different comparisons in the loss of my family members. At the age of 13 years I saw my parents go through the sorrow of the death of a little baby son, "Maxwell", who was stillborn and looked perfect—not a blemish on him. He was such a tiny precious bundle—God's perfect creation.

At the age of 32 I witnessed the sudden tragic passing of my Dad (aged 58 years). It took me two years to come to terms with his passing. The shock, the snatching away without warning! He was playing with our kids, who were aged 10, 9 and 8 just moments before he died. All the precious moments he would miss as our family grew up. So many things left unsaid!!

Then years later, when I was aged 49, I said goodbye to Mum. After five years of suffering with Alzheimer's and then cancer, which she never knew she had, or possibly she would not have coped with. To watch her lose all her dignity and ability to care for herself was very hard and so we prayed that God would be merciful and take her home in order that she would not suffer any longer. Mum was gone in two months. A special memory was in her last days, I would hold her hand and play old hymns and a tear would roll down her face, even though she could not speak.

Mum made sure we heard about Jesus. In spite of all the losses, I did not blame God, as I realized that He has a plan for all our lives. Our losses are not as great as the sacrifice He made for us and our sins. It was during these times, even though I was surrounded by family and friends, that I realized it was my faith in God that enabled me to feel a peace and comfort that only He can give.

By Priscilla Gaston



## What 'Wild at Heart' did for men 'Captivating' will do for you

Every woman was once a little girl. And every little girl holds in her heart her most precious dreams. She longs to be swept up into a romance, to play an irreplaceable role in a great adventure, to be the Beauty of the story. Those desires are far more than child's play. They are the secret to the feminine heart.

And yet—how many women do you know who ever find that life? As the years pass by, the heart of a woman gets pushed aside, wounded, buried. She finds no romance except in novels, no adventure except on television, and she doubts very much that she will ever be the Beauty in any tale.

Most women think they have to settle for a life of efficiency and duty, chores and errands, striving to be the woman they "ought" to be but often feeling they have failed. Sadly, too many messages for Christian women add to the pressure. "Do these ten things, and you will be a godly woman." The effect has not been good on the feminine soul.

But her heart is still there. Sometimes when she watches a movie, sometimes in the wee hours of the night, her heart begins to speak again. A thirst rises within her to find the life she was meant to live—the life she dreamed of as a little girl.

The message of Captivating is this: Your heart matters more than anything else in all creation. The desires you had as a little girl and the longings you still feel as a woman—they are telling you of the life God created you to live. He offers to come now as the Hero of your story, to rescue your heart and release you to live as a fully alive and feminine woman.

**A woman who is truly captivating.**

## Captivating

**Unveiling the Mystery of a  
Woman's Soul**

By John & Stasi Eldredge

Publishers: Thomas Nelson Inc.

# Lessons From Malachi

## "The Burden of the Word of the Lord" - Ch. 1:1a

In Hebrew there are many meanings to the word "burden". It can be something we carry for ourselves or something we carry for others as a porter. Then it can be a spiritual burden, whereby we can do nothing else but lift our hands unto the Lord in prayer and of course then there is the meaning that something may be burdensome to us. However the burden that Malachi speaks of in Chapter 1:1 is different again. This burden comes from God and is a prophetic utterance of doom to people living sinful lives. Surprisingly enough it is also sung. So what was this prophetic message of doom that Malachi was given for the children of Israel? Verse two begins with one of many. Can we imagine this authoritative man walking through Jerusalem, standing in the temple amongst the busyness of religious worship they were so proud of, singing out this song of doom?

### DEALING WITH DOUBTS

**"I have loved you, says the Lord. Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?'" - Ch. 1:2a**

A comparative situation is found in Luke 19:41-44, where we find Jesus burdened over Jerusalem and those who lived there. ***"And when He approached, He saw the city, and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground, and your children within you; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation'."*** (NASB). This message of doom was fulfilled in AD 70 when Rome overthrew Jerusalem completely, even pulling the stones of the famous temple apart to extract all the pieces of gold they could. In Matthew 23:37-39 we find His famous words ***"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'."*** (NASB) How sad that we seldom take the time to sit and meditate on the great love God has for us. When He expressed those words ***"I have loved you!"***, we can see the depth of His love and sorrow over their disobedience and insensitivity.

In this section we are dealing with our

doubts and it is important for us to realize that from the time of our birth, we are suffering with an empty hole that is simply waiting to be filled with the love of the Lord. It seems, instead we tend to fill it with other things—escapisms, happiness fillers. However they never last and unfortunately often these very things we class as our 'friends in life' or the 'things that satisfy', often cause us to constantly make withdrawals from God's love bank for us. They temporarily fill a need only to deplete us further and sometimes leave us with a dreadful feeling of worthlessness.

Those who had returned to Jerusalem had also tended to fill their lives with happiness fillers. They had forgotten their history and the miraculous ways in which God had directed their forefathers. They had followed their religious traditions without allowing God to give them any personal experience of His great love for them. So He spends the next few verses explaining to them that firstly He, as God, is the Potter and they were the clay. He has the right and ability to see good and bad in each one of them. He knows those who will never turn to Him, in spite of His deep desire that they would do so.

Esau and Jacob were twins, but not identical and completely different. Different in their looks, ways and attitudes towards God. Neither were always good, but Jacob, the youngest had a heart that was soft towards God, whilst Esau was filled with arrogance and pride. The Almighty explains that due to this, He chose Jacob as the family line in which His Son the Messiah would come. He reminded them of His wrath against evil, but how He delights to protect and love His own.

The clue then for us in understanding and



overcoming our doubts; doubts about ourselves, doubts as to whether we are loved by family, doubts as to God's love; and doubts as to our worth in Him—is to follow Jacob's example and to cling to God. To seek Him with all our heart and to shun Esau's attitude of despising God and His great love for us. He is God and His Word is truth. Each of us as women are of great worth to Him and He longs to protect us from our own foolishness and sinful pride. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were unwilling—am I too unwilling? Are you unwilling? If so, we will never recognize our worth nor God's great love for us. Let us seek Him out with all our heart, and so be able to stand tall knowing that He saw us in all our wretchedness, yet He sent His Son to die for us, that we might be found worthy in Him who has redeemed us unto Himself.

### DEALING WITH WORLDLY INFLUENCES: AND DEALING WITH OUR MANY ROLES.

**"A son honours his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honour? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence?"...Yet you say, "In what way have we despised Your name?" Ch 1:6**

Israel, the very nation who had been called out of wickedness, carried, taught, and blessed by the Lord, were now showing great contempt for God and His Holiness. In their sacrifices they were bringing animals that they could afford to lose. Animals that were far from being in good condition. Animals that were lame and sick. They were weary of their religious activities and were often known to sneer in mockery at the traditions of their laws and faith. In fact they had become so bad that God allowed other nations to hold them in contempt.

God is a Holy and Righteous God. He is the Creator. He is a great King and His name is to be held in great honour and respect. We find in the Bible angels proclaiming Him as: -

<sup>1</sup> ***"Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory"*** and again <sup>2</sup> ***"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is and is to come"*** (KJV)

This Holy and Righteous God who loves us so much, who sees all things and knows all things about us—do we bring to Him the whole of our hearts? Do we worship Him and Him only, or do we like the Israelites bring to Him polluted offerings? Our lives are filled with pollution from worldly influences, wrong presuppositions, discontentment and broken relationships. We live in a world with low morals and the value systems that penetrate our hearts and souls daily drive us from God and His Holiness. Our belief systems are often not based upon the Word of God, but rather on the word of man. When it seems too hard to abide by God's truth, we change the meanings

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for names and say it is the way things are now and so therefore we must accept it. We live in fear of losing our children because of the changes to Government regulations and then back away from our responsibilities as Christians in fear of offending others.

God's heart was breaking over the state of the Israelites. Is it breaking any less over the way we live our lives? And don't we as Christians often cause non-Christians to scoff and ridicule our Holy and Righteous God by the way we live our lives?

Malachi reminds us in Chapter 2:11 that we cause the separation from God by linking ourselves to the world and its ways. Here, we are also reminded again of the Holiness of the Lord and how much God protects and loves His Holiness! Verse 12 tells them they will be cut off and their offerings will not be regarded.

#### Yet you say, "for what reason?" Ch 2:14a

It is because they and ourselves also live false lives before God and His Righteousness. <sup>3</sup> **"For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."** (NKJV)

Do you remember the old toothbrush ad where the top of a cartoon character's head was lifted open to reveal the whole of its mouth? The Hebrew meaning here is to open up the head from the scalp thus obtaining the ability to look deep down inside—we are totally open for God to view right down into our innermost being. He, our Holy and Righteous God sees all and even when we think we are being holy, compared to His Holiness we are simply like filthy rags.

How important it is for us therefore, to put away all falsehood and lies and to open our hearts and lives fully to Him.

#### DEALING WITH OUR BELIEF SYSTEMS

**"You have wearied the Lord with your words; yet you say, "In what way have we wearied Him?" Ch 2:17**

It is common to believe in these days, that all go to Heaven when they die. Or all are the children of God and He delights in all people no matter what they do or how they live their lives. It is common to hear people proclaim "if there is a God, then where is His justice?" "How could this happen to me?" - thereby placing all blame for sin upon Him.

Israel was no different. How important it is therefore to make sure of our belief systems.

No, not everyone will enter the Kingdom of Heaven! Only those who recognize their sin

and wretchedness before our Holy and Righteous God and come to Him in true repentance. Those who claim the Lord Jesus as their own personal sacrifice and punishment for sin and then these convicted souls ask for the forgiveness of God and His Son to become Lord of their lives, thus enabling the wonder and peace of His Holy Spirit to enter their hearts and lives. These only are the ones who enter the Kingdom of Heaven when death snatches them from the earth.

Malachi proclaims the first coming of the Lord in Ch 3:1, but in v2 he reminds us that when He returns the second time, those who are left behind will not be able to stand before His Holiness.

#### DEALING WITH OUR PRIDE.

**"I am the Lord, I do not change!" Ch 3:6**

**"Return to Me, and I will return to you"...but you said "In what way shall we return?" Ch 3:7b**

**"Will a man rob God: yet you have robbed Me!" but you say, "In what way have we robbed You?" Ch 3:8**

All of mankind is plagued with pride. Consider once again the thoughts about our temperaments. Each of them carries some kind of pride, even those who suffer with self-pity. You see pride is sometimes visible to others and ourselves, but at times Satan fools us into thinking it is not pride, but instead we wallow like a pig in mud. We say in our hearts, "it's not fair, why me? Why are they so mean, or why do I always miss out?" However as we return to the Lord, He reveals to us a different story. He says, "my dear, dear daughter, why do you think you deserve something different? Have you not considered it might not be about you at all, have you thought that it may be the battle that I fight on your behalf, or have you thought about the fact that whilst I teach you to trust me I am also teaching my other children other lessons?" Unfortunately self-pity is purely the flip-side of pride, the hidden section that none of us recognizes. And so the Lord says to us "I am the Lord and I do not change!...Return to me and you will find that I will return to you—for I never really left, it was you who did so!...Don't rob me dear daughter of my rights in discipline, in guidance, in blessing."

#### DEALING WITH ACCEPTANCE

**Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this...If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it." Ch 3:10**

Our Holy and Righteous God wants to bless us. He wants to save us and He wants to

keep us. Throughout history women have been downtrodden and told lies. We have been treated by the world as sexual objects and work horses at home and work. We have believed the lie that Satan wants us to believe—that we are worthless, and any worth we do have is based purely on our looks and behaviour.

But God, in His great mercy reminds us of something different. We are made in His image.

- Man is to reveal God on the move, in action. His glory is shown by our men showing grace and mercy, protection and guidance.
- Woman (the crown of His creation—for Eve was the very last item God created) is to reveal His beauty.

We long to be pursued, to be romanced and loved. When we do not know this blessing, we seek it elsewhere. When we do not find it we know only a worthless emotion. Our God and King wants to romance us, He wants to pursue us and He wants to love us. Allow Him to do so and delight in Him.

We long to be part of a great adventure.



To be needed and greatly loved. As Christians we discover that even though others may not need us—God the Almighty does. He longs for us to love Him and to be His servants. He has women everywhere waiting for His love to be revealed to them. He has husbands and men and children waiting for our beauty and encouragement to break the hardness of their hearts. Submit to His authority and follow His guiding hand.

As women we long to unveil our beauty. A little girl's twirling skirt is not meaningless. However the beauty that needs to be unveiled is not purely physical it is also spiritual. Grow in Him and the Lord will show you how to unveil your beauty in order that the "Beauty of Christ" may also be revealed to those we meet.

We are indeed loved by God. We do have a purpose for living and we also have a desperate need to remain holy and separate from the world. Firstly it prevents us from being separated from God and His love, and secondly it helps us to be able to know our true worth in Him. Thirdly it reveals His Beauty and Love to those we come alongside.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 6:3b

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 4:8b

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 4: 12 & 13. (NKJV)

By Ruth Marie

# Your Beauty Revealed

Oh Lord, I've come a long, long way —  
From the little girl who used to play.  
Confusion has reigned in my heart so deep—  
As to where I fit and so I weep.

I weep for the years of sin and doubt;  
Of the worldly influences all about.  
I weep at all of the wrong beliefs,  
That have been part of my life and caused You so much grief!  
But Lord I mostly fear  
That I've disappointed You—the One so dear;  
By the sin and pride  
Sadly it has been daily my guide.

So here I am before Your throne,  
I've claimed You Lord, as my very own.  
But still I struggle as to know,  
Just how to live, what to say and where to go!  
Lord You know as a little girl,  
I'd dance in order that my skirt would twirl.  
Then at times, I'd just love to be  
Out and about and climbing a tree.

As others watched I grew and became more mature,  
I thought it unfair at being a girl, so hardness of heart showed me  
less than pure.  
It seemed to me we were only there to carry hardship and sorrow,  
Whilst the men in my life had freedom to borrow.

I wish I'd known—oh I wish I'd been taught,  
That You'd already prepared the way for me to be bought.  
Your work in my soul was for others to see—  
Your Beauty that had already been placed in me.

Lord you made me the woman that I am  
You made me specifically to fit Your plan.  
And so I ask Your Spirit to be my guide  
In order that I might also view Your Beauty inside.

I thank You dear Lord for romancing my soul,  
You pursued me in order to love and cherish me—this was Your  
pure goal!

You've made me a very important part  
Of Your great adventure from the very start.

An adventure so wonderful it is hard to believe—  
That from sin and its chains I've clearly been freed!

And now Lord to also discover the truth  
In my life I've a beauty to be part of Your proof—  
To others who also long for Your love so supreme,

To cradle, comfort and encompass their being.  
I thank You dear Lord, I've been created for Your  
glory.

But what a wonder—there is more to the story!  
I've been saved by Your grace that is for sure

For You died in my place, my punishment to endure.

And now I've been buried and risen in Christ,  
I'm seated with You Lord and feel truly alive!

How lovely to know Your beauty is true,  
It invites, it nourishes and makes us anew.

Your beauty comforts and truly inspires us all to draw near  
to the Father who through His Son  
has satisfied all His Holiness requires.



By Wendy Davie

*We are all the way God has made us, therefore what we can change, by coming to Him in faith and obedience—we should strive to do so, but what we can't—we should begin to thank God for it.*

# About Us:

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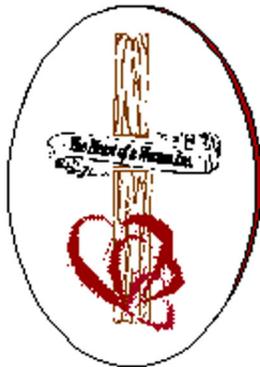
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## Our Vision:

*To share God's truth and  
encourage each other  
in our Christian faith.*

## What we believe:

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God. We seek to follow its doctrine.
- In the trinity of the Godhead.
- Christ, Himself as our sinless Lord.
- Filled with all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, indeed, being God come in the flesh.
- The personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit.
- The creation and fall of man.
- Christ's death, burial and resurrection.
- The need for all to be born again in Him.
- That we were created in Christ unto good works.
- The resurrection of the body.
- The judgement of both the living and the dead
- The eternal blessedness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked.
- That Satan is real and so is hell.
- That Jesus Christ will return as He has promised.

***This magazine has been given to you by:***

*If you feel the need for personal contact with any queries concerning your spiritual life, or burdens you bear, please feel free to either contact the church above or write to us at 'The Heart of a Woman Inc.'*