

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 2, No. 4

“And ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:10

July/August 1999

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Time—A Precious Talent

Are there enough hours in your day? Do you know where they all go? At the end of the day, are you exhausted and frustrated because another day is history and you did not accomplish much of anything? If so, there is a big club you may join, because many—perhaps most—of us experience the same thing!

When God created the earth and the heavens above it, He created time for us and set it in motion. It is one gift, one talent, that is given to each of us equally; there are twenty-four hours in your day as there are in mine. No doubt, God expects us to make the best possible use of this talent, and our failure to do so is, I believe, displeasing to Him.

Many articles and books have been written about “getting organized” and “saving time.” Many of them contain detailed outlines and instructions in methods of achieving order in our lives and getting things done. Most of them “leave me cold” because I would **never** have time to set up the elaborate systems recommended! I am reminded of a person I once knew who spent most of her time “organizing” her work while the work itself piled up. I am

convinced there is a better way! Could it be that we simply waste time, that we squander the minutes? The minutes add up to hours, and thus our days fade into oblivion and we have nothing to show for them. But if we consciously determine to use our minutes and hours wisely, asking God to guide us in setting our priorities, I believe we will

and in communing with our heavenly Father. The same applies to the use of computers; while they are necessities, it seems, for many of us, too much time can be spent chatting with friends and strangers, exploring the Internet and playing games.

Consider television. This is perhaps the greatest time-wasting tool that has ever been invented. How many hours are spent each week watching meaningless, soul destroying shows and endless commercials! The noise and visual stimulation practically constitute “assault and battery” on the nervous system. How can the still, small voice of God speaking to our hearts be heard above the din of television? The next time we are tempted to watch television, let’s first turn to Philippians 4:8 in our Bibles and read: “... whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on
(Continued on page 8)

Our Mission Statement: Believing that we can find completeness in all areas of our lives only “in him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10), it is the mission of *Hearth to Hearth* to provide a forum for Christian women to reach out to each other in friendship, with joy and hope; and to encourage each other to find our completeness in Christ as we sojourn here on our way to the kingdom.



realize His blessing on our efforts.

Consider the telephone. It is a wonderful instrument of convenience and it enables us to stay in touch with family and friends. But hours can be wasted just talking and gossiping on the phone; hours that could be spent in meaningful labor, in helping others

Can Winter Be Far Away?

Is it really July already? It seems only a day or two ago that the icy winds of winter were blowing. Right now a few hours of winter might feel awfully good to those of us in the mid and deep south where in July the weather can be sweltering! "It's not the heat," they say, "it's the humidity." So true!

Summer is a good time of year though. We who are fortunate to live in the country get to observe close up the seasonal changes in the natural world. Come spring, I am always amazed at the rapidity with which the earth produces its bounty. It seems that only yesterday the landscape was bare and today everything is green and flourishing! Then suddenly the frantic springtime rush is over and the earth settles in for summer. The farmers have planted the seeds and now the corn, the hay, the soybeans, the cotton are quietly growing, quietly producing; the fruit trees and berry vines also; and even the wild plants of the roadside, the marsh and the hedgerows—each "after his kind" as ordained by the Creator. (Genesis 1:12)

Let us not forget the purpose of spring and summer, and even if we are living in a city or in the suburbs these are the days for our own preparations for winter! In the March/April issue of *Hearth to Hearth* we printed an article entitled "Are You Prepared for a 'Winter'?" in which the writer applied Biblical principles to present-day preparedness. It is easy to drift in the doldrums of summer and forget needful preparations for a "winter"

which could come in the form of the much-hyped Y2K computer breakdown, but it could also come about in other ways. If you missed that issue of *Hearth to Hearth*, we will be happy to send you one upon request.

Most importantly, in our rush to make temporal preparations for future hard times, we must not neglect our spiritual preparation. To me, the saddest words in all of Scripture are found in Jeremiah 8:20: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." But it does not have to be so! God has made ample provision for the salvation of every person. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17. Wonderful truth! God had a Son and He gave Him so that the world, **that you and I**, could be saved. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead [divine nature] bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Colossians 2:9, 10.

Grace Cox

P.S. Please take special notice of the letter in "Mail Call" (Reader to Reader) from "A Searching Reader" who has questions for us. We ask that you prayerfully consider her letter. And then if you feel impressed to do so, respond to the heart-felt need that prompted her questions. This is what *Hearth to Hearth* is all about—readers sharing with each other and gaining strength through sharing, thus assisting each other in becoming "complete in him."



OFFER:

Last month we offered a book for those who might be having trouble in the area of getting to know Jesus. This month we would like to offer this little book called Happiness Digest (also known as Steps to Christ) to *anyone* who would just like to become closer to Jesus.

We have found this book to be very helpful in our own lives, and are making it available to our

readers for a suggested donation of \$1 to cover postage and handling. This donation is not required, but would be appreciated. We believe you will be greatly blessed in the reading of it and will want to share it with others.

MAIL CALL:

I enjoyed *Hearth to Hearth* very much. Please send it to [a new name for the mailing list]. Helen/TN

I believe that the church Jesus is coming back for consists of all denominations and that there are good, dedicated people in all denominations. So I was impressed at how easily your newsletter crossed the boundaries of the different "beliefs," and could easily speak to all Christians. I have learned from this, and now it is my goal to target a broader reading audience when I write.

Kathy/TN

(Continued bottom of next page.)

READER TO READER

Dear *Hearth to Hearth*,

This letter is my request for responses from readers. I would like to know how others feel about certain things.

All through history people have been wondering about their purpose in life. Why are we here? As we get older we wonder if we chose the right course. Should we have spent more time in school, more time preparing for the future, more time with our families, more time in church work? More time on our knees?

Consider these texts:

- “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Eccl. 12:13.
- “God is love.” 1 John 4:8.
- “God created man in his own image.” Genesis 1:27.
- “God is...not willing that any should perish.” 2 Peter 3:9.

I believe that, basically, we were put here to love God and other people. I would like to know how others feel about certain things, and am hoping that readers of *Hearth to Hearth* will respond to some questions I have that trouble me:

- Do you feel a lonely emptiness inside?
- Do you believe in your church, but are you longing to feel you belong to the group?
- Do you feel isolated because you are so “different”?
- Do you feel that no one understands your pain or grief?
- Do you have a fear of being lost?
- Do you have a deep, spiritual desire to do more, but don’t know what to do or how to begin?
- Do you feel as if you are the only one who has these feelings?
- Do you think these feelings could be part of our God-given desire to love and be loved (God reaching out to us)?
- In what ways do you think we can crack the wall between us and break through to share in God’s wonderful love?

Do you have any experiences to share relating to these questions that might help me and others?

We need to know we are not alone. Please write!

—A Searching Reader,
Diane/TN

(Continued from previous page)

[A poem of Kathy’s appears in this issue following “My Miracle of Grace,” a “Hearth Kettle” feature. Ed.]

Thank you for sending me *Hearth to Hearth*. What a blessing!
Peggy/TN

I just got the latest edition of *Hearth to Hearth* today. ...I want you to know how much I appreciate your continued prayers and the newsletters. These last 12 months have been a real battle, both physically and spiritually! ...The newsletter got me through many rough, rough days.”
Lisa/TN

NOTE OF GRATITUDE:

We at *Hearth to Hearth* have many things for which to be thankful and we just want to praise God

for His abundant blessings in this work.

For the patient, long-suffering technical assistance of Lynnford Beachy and Allen Stump of Smyrna Gospel Ministries; for the help and encouragement of our husbands; for the assistance of those who have provided financial help with the costs of printing and mailing; for the ways in which God has overseen the production of the paper; and for each reader who has written or called to express their appreciation for the blessing that *Hearth to Hearth* has been in their life, we praise the Lord with thanksgiving. It is our desire that God will continue to use this newsletter to His glory, and we solicit your prayers as we plan future issues.

PRAYER CALL

[Prayer requests are included anonymously, but of course God knows the identity of each one. Ed.]

Please pray for our new little home church. We are meeting each Sabbath morning, claiming the promise that “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20. Please pray that we might grow a bit in number and that our dedication to truth as it is in Jesus will remain strong and courageous.

My husband is not a Christian, but I know God loves him even more than I do and yearns to save him. Please pray that I might witness more effectively to win my husband to Christ.

God's Biddings are Enablings!

Being a widow and alone, I had extra time on my hands. One day during my reveries a delightful thought came to my mind: Why not go to Africa for a visit!

Putting the thought into action, a letter was soon written to my daughter and her husband who had spent many years in Africa. At that time they were administrators of Solusi College near Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. (Solusi College became a university in 1994.) "What would you think," my letter said, "if I went back with you after your next furlough, returning to the States with you on your following furlough?" There were two years between furloughs.

Their return letter was filled with excitement: "We are so glad you will be visiting us!" To make a long story shorter, passport, Visas and flight tickets were arranged and I was packed, ready and waiting for the arrival of my children from overseas.

After a time of visiting their children and grandchildren, his parents and other relatives, we were ready to board the plane for the trip. It was my first experience on a large aircraft, but all went well and in due time we had arrived at our destination. It was exciting, getting to know staff, students, campus and the surroundings of Solusi.

I had brought my crocheting materials along and soon was busy at my project—making baby outfits for all newborn Solusi babies. It kept me busy for there were many married students on campus besides staff families. Before long I began to wish I could do something more for the Lord so I prayed about it: "Lord, I want to do something for You. Please give me something to do." Don't ever pray that prayer unless you mean it!

Very soon I had a visitor, the wife of the college chaplain. She was the Sabbath School coordinator, and they had decided to ask me to take the junior baptismal class. I was flabbergasted! I had never had much success with juniors in America and the only teaching I had ever done was to head a kindergarten department in church. I had tried teaching juniors once but didn't feel adequate for the job.

My mother had always said, "Never say 'No' when God asks you to do something. All His biddings are enablings." There were no junior baptismal study guides to go by, but with "fear and trembling" I said I would try. My visitor explained that there were to be sixteen young people in the class ranging in age from nine to fifteen. At least half of them were staff children (two belonged to the chaplain), and several would be leaving for boarding academy in January.

As soon as I was alone I dropped to my knees and tearfully pled with the Lord: "Oh, Lord, I asked You for something to do but I didn't expect this! You know I've never been able to work with juniors and I don't have any material

to help me. I cannot do it without Your help. Show me how, and what to use for help, and what to say. Help me get next to the young people and make us close, loving friends. Give me wisdom to make the Bible plain enough that they will never forget. You must help. Thank you for answering my prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen." Knowing that a continually close relationship with God is necessary for Him to work through us, I also prayed that He would keep me close to Himself and remind me to continually depend on Him.

The days of miracles are not past! Things began to happen. Books were graciously gotten—enough for all the juniors and me—and they were written for juniors. The class was conducted in our home for two hours twice a week. We chose a theme song, and I taught them to chain reference their Bibles (marking texts from one to another according to topics) for future use. After several classes, another girl, who had already been baptized, asked to join. Some of the youth called me Grandma, and we had a wonderful time! Sometimes mothers of my students or college staff members would visit our class.

When the classes were completed I made an hour-long appointment with each junior to determine their understanding and acceptance of what we had studied; to counsel and pray with them. Then with a hug and a prayer I assured each one of my love and prayers for their future. Two of the staff fathers were ministers, and they baptized their own children (see picture) as well as the others. With God's help, the task that had at first seemed so forbidding became a joy and a rich blessing for me, for the young people and for their parents as well.

If God asks you to do something, don't say "No." "All His



biddings are enablings." Another experience while in Africa (I was there four years) proves this saying to be true as well—but then, that's another story.

Mattie Laurell

[Mattie Laurell, who was 72 years old at the time these events took place, is an octogenarian who makes her home with her daughter and son-in-law, Esther and George McDaniel, in Chunky, MS. She spends much time in Bible study; and also enjoys writing articles and reading.]

My Miracle of Grace

Today is my miracle—life with God and all the blessings that come with it. But it has not always been this way. I have heard it said that hell is complete separation, both from God and man. What a dark, lonely place that is! I know, because I have been there.

Satan started working early in my life, cutting away at my perception of things with his blade of low self-esteem. Though I was surrounded by love in a wonderful family and I made good grades in school, my self-doubts and feelings of inadequacy would not go away. All of us experience changes during our early years, and somewhere along the way I started looking for a place where I could feel as if I belonged. Unfortunately I found that place with the wrong crowd. To be accepted, however, I would have to drink alcohol and take drugs. I did not want to do these things, but out of my desire to “belong” and my need for “acceptance,” I began to participate in these things. It was not long before I reached the point where I looked

forward to a night of drinking. Then came the time when I was overwhelmed by the **need** to drink and felt powerless to resist.

Life became a blur. I did not appreciate family and friends; I had no love for them and none for myself. At times I wanted to die, but short of that, if only I could fall asleep and not wake up until things were better. I did not stop grasping for hope, but refused to allow myself to really believe that the day would ever come when things would be better. I existed that way for years, continuing to drown in alcoholism and

drugs. Inside me, time stood still; outside, the world spun without me. I lost family members and friends, but I was too numb to feel the pain.

At that point I did not know there could be life without alcohol even though there was none with it. Satan was in complete control. In the back of my mind I knew God existed, but could He ever help *me*? I would go through mental and physical destruction before finding the answer to that question. When I found the answer, it was *Yes!* He could help even me.

When I did reach out for help, a support group was there who believed in me and encouraged me. Then Christ took my hand and He has never let go. At times the journey has been hard. At times I have not had the strength to continue, but Christ has carried me.

I can neither forget the past nor shut the door on it. Remembering it helps keep me grateful for today. Knowing what it is like to live without Christ has been a costly lesson—one that, with His help, I will never forget. God’s grace is priceless, yet given freely. Today, through God’s grace, I have healthy, happy children, a great husband, a home and peace of mind. Today, in Christ is where I belong; He is my armor

and Satan cannot cut through that.

Nadine Northcutt

[Nadine Northcutt is a pen name. Kathy McKnight lives in rural west Tennessee where she and her husband are the parents of a nine-year-old daughter. She loves country living, but her main interest is studying and learning about God. Kathy is very active in her church, and participates in producing their monthly newsletter for women, *The Ladies’ Gazette*. In addition, she is responsible for *Youth Power*, her church’s newsletter for the young people, which she refers to as “my new baby!” Her hobby is writing and she has recently compiled a book of her poetry entitled, *The Light of Life*.]

Thank God for New Beginnings

*I reached out to God and cried,
And felt such great release
I was filled with joy inside,
And felt His wondrous peace.
Because He suffered and died for me
I was able to start anew
From my past, and now I am free—
To Him forever true.
He put a fire down in my soul
And took away my pain.
He took from me sin’s awful toll,
And cleansed me from its stain.
I’ve never been so happy.
He made life worth living.
What a change He made in me.
Thank God for new beginnings!*

Kathy McKnight

Encourage One Another—A Daily Ministry

Encouragement is part of God’s character. Our God is called the God of comfort, patience and consolation. He is the God who “comforts those who are cast down.” (2 Corinthians 7:6; see also Romans 15:5 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

He gives us “everlasting consolation.” (2 Thessalonians 2:16) He never gives up encouraging us! He gives us “strong encouragement.” (Hebrews 6:18) God constantly encourages us in His Word. He continually exhorts us to “Fear not!” When Jesus was on earth, He constantly encouraged with the words, “Be of good cheer...Be not afraid.” This is the desire of God’s heart. He constantly wants to encourage us. But He can only tangibly do this through His people, His body.

Every day He wants to load us with blessings!

Every day He wants to encourage us!

Every day He wants to cheer us up and inspire us!

But He is looking for vessels through whom He can minister. That’s why He commands us in Hebrews 3:13 to “Encourage one another daily.” He doesn’t tell us to do it once a month! Or even once a week when you see one another at church. No! He exhorts us to encourage each other every day! Can you just imagine what would happen to a body of God’s people if each one was being encouraged by someone else every day—and each believer was encouraging someone else? It would be very

difficult to be laid low with depression. It would be hard to backslide. It would be difficult to get into unbelief.

God understands the frailty of our hearts and how easily we can get discouraged and despondent. That’s why He has given us this commandment. Read Hebrews 3:12,13 again: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But encourage [“exhort” KJV] one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” God doesn’t want us to go astray. That’s why He commands us to encourage one another every day.

Can you just imagine what would happen to a body of God’s people if each one was being encouraged by someone else every day—and each believer was encouraging someone else?

The Living Bible translation of Proverbs 12:25 says, “A word of encouragement does WONDERS.” [Emphasis supplied.] One word of encouragement can change someone’s life. One act of love and kindness can turn someone’s life around. Encouragement can do wonders in your marriage relationship and in your family. Your husband will change when you stop nagging and start encouraging. Your children will thrive and blossom on encouragement. The atmosphere in your home will change. You will even be healthier. Discouraging words can make people sick. Positive, life-giving words give health.

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24)

“The tongue of the wise is health.” (Proverbs 12:18)

“A faithful ambassador is health.” (Proverbs 13:17)

As you wake each morning and spend time with God before you start the day, ask God to show you who He wants you to encourage this day. Give God time for Him to speak to you. As you wait, He will show you. Then ask Him what He wants you to do. He will show you creative ways to encourage that will change people’s lives. Take time every day to think about each one of your children and how you can inspire them. Take time each day to think about your husband and of encouraging things you can say to him.

Best Friends

*Each time we meet, you always say
Some word of praise that makes my day.
You see some hidden, struggling trait,
Encourage it and make it great.*

*Fight fisted little buds of good
Bloom large because you said they would.
A glad, mad music in me sings;
My soul sprouts tiny flaming wings.*

*My day takes on a brand-new zest
Your encouragement brings out my best,
Revives my spirit, flings it high;
For God loves praise, and so do I.*

I remember one lovely incident when I was teaching on this subject back in New Zealand many years ago. One dear young mother, who lived across the road from me, began to wait on the Lord each morning for God to show her who He wanted her to encourage. God burdened her heart with a widow who lived down the street. She felt that she should do something practical for her and also visit her. She baked some scones, but felt that it wasn't enough. So she went down to the shop and looked around for a little gift to purchase for her. As she looked to the Lord to guide her, she felt drawn to a little vase that would only hold one flower. She took the scones and the gift to this widow who was so blessed by her love and thoughtfulness.

However, God wasn't finished yet! Another sister was also waiting on God and he burdened her heart with this same widow! "What do you want me to do to encourage her?" she asked the Lord. She felt God touching her heart to buy some flowers for her. Off she went to the florist shop to buy a big bunch of flowers but when she got there she felt impressed by the Lord to purchase only one flower, a lovely specimen! Can you imagine how blessed this dear widow felt when the second sister arrived a few minutes later with the one flower to put in the vase that would hold just one flower? She realized how much God loved her and thought about her. And these ladies were so thrilled to know that they were sensitive and obedient to the Lord.

God is wanting to do special things like this every day for every one of us—if only we would take time to listen to Him and obey His prompting. This is supernatural living. This is walking in the Spirit.

Over the years I have encouraged folk to make an Encouragement Check List for themselves. Across the

To be an encourager, you have to stop thinking about yourself and give some room in your mind and heart for others.

page write the days of the week. Down the side write: 1) the name of your husband, 2) the names of each of your children, and 3) a space for someone else outside your home. At the end of each day, check your list to see if you have encouraged your husband and each one of your children—and also blessed someone outside your home. Do this for a few weeks until you get into the habit of encouraging DAILY!

SAY SO

If we feel a kindly thought,
Warm and helpful—then we ought
Not to keep it close and tight,
But instead, with all our might—

LET'S SAY SO!

If we feel a thought of praise
For our neighbor's words or ways
Which should cheer him on his way,
Streak with gold his hours of grey—

LET'S SAY SO!

But so often—what a shame
Though we're free enough with blame,
Out of shyness, out of pride,
Help and praise we somehow hide—

LET'S SAY SO!

Some day, when it's little use
We shall let our praises loose,
We shall wish we'd mentioned how
Kind we felt—then why not now—

LET'S SAY SO!

To be an encourager, you have to stop thinking about yourself and give some room in your mind and heart for others. I will never forget some words God spoke to me years ago. "Nancy," He said, "how can I reveal to you the needs of others if you are always thinking about yourself?" Oh how true this is. If all our thoughts are on ourselves, we will have no room for God to reveal to us the needs of others. Just as we have a certain limit of physical strength, so we have a certain limit of emotional capacity. If all our emotions are spent on ourselves, we will not have any left to pour out on others. No wonder the scripture says in Philippians 2:4, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." The Living Bible says, "Don't just think about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and in what they are doing."

It's a good idea to have encouraging cards ready and on hand to send to those whom God puts on your heart. Encourage and bless the older people, especially those who are widows and those who are living on their own. Always positively encourage the mothers who are "with child." Bless the lonely. And don't forget to give encouraging words to children, too. Don't leave them aside.

We are either a spirit dampener or a spirit refresher! Which are you? Be inspired by these scriptures:

“We have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.” (Philemon 7; see also v. 20)

“...We were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.” (2 Corinthians 7:13)

“The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus for he oft refreshed me...” (2 Timothy 1:16)

[I love the Amplified translation of this scripture:]
“May the Lord grant His mercy to the family of Onesiphorus, for he often showed me kindness and ministered to my needs—comforting and reviving and bracing me like fresh air.”)

**“So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony, and on the growth of one another’s character.”
(Romans 14:19 J.B. Phillips)**

“Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus...they have oft refreshed my spirit and yours.” (1 Corinthians 16:17,18)

“He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.” (Proverbs 11:25 NIV)

“Therefore encourage each other and build each other up.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11, JNT)

“So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony, and on the growth of one another’s character.” (Romans 14:19 J.B. Phillips)

“Let us outdo one another in being helpful and kind to each other.” (Hebrews 10:24 TLB)

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

“A word spoken in due season, how good it is.” (Proverbs 15:23)

“So go cheering and strengthening each other.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11 J.B. Phillips)

“Let us outdo one another in being helpful and kind to each other.” (Hebrews 10:24 TLB)

“The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned.” (Isaiah 50:4)

Nancy Campbell

[Article and poems by Nancy Campbell are used by permission of *Above Rubies*, PO Box 681687, Franklin, TN 37068-1687.]

(Continued from page 1)

these things.” If, in all honesty, the program meets the qualifications, well and good.

The same scriptural test may be applied to the **books and magazines** that we are tempted to read. If they don’t measure up to the standard that God has set, our time could be better spent and our minds kept unpolluted. Needful duties can be neglected even by the reading of good material if we are undisciplined in our work and reading habits. Those of us who like to read can while away many precious hours with a good book! (But how many hours do we spend reading **the Good Book**?)

What about the time we spend **worrying**? Worry saps our energy and reduces our efficiency. If the worry is a legitimate one, prayerfully take the steps necessary to solve the problem, if possible. If it is not within your power to do so, give it to Jesus, your burden bearer, and the worrying can cease. Try to apply the rule that all of us know well: change the things you can change; accept the things you cannot change; pray for the wisdom to know the difference. When we find ourselves adrift in the doldrums of worry, we need to read Matthew 6:25-34 and take comfort in the fact that God knows all about it and has made provision for us. There are many other precious promises in God’s Word—at least one if not several for any given situation. He is faithful that promised. Trust Him!

And then there is **self-pity**. Someone once said that a man wrapped up in himself makes a small package. Let’s not waste our time and energy feeling sorry for ourselves, even if (at least in our own opinion) we have every right to do so. Instead, if we take our eyes off “self” and put our time and energy to good use within our own homes and families, and in helping others, self-pity will fade away.

Before going to bed each night, develop a plan for the next day. Decide how you will spend the hours allotted to you.

Organize your time. Before going to bed each night, develop a plan for the next day. Decide how you will spend the hours allotted to you. Upon arising, commit your plans to God, and ask Him to give you a willing spirit if His plan for your day should be different from yours. If you have no plans or goals but simply drift through the day, at the end of it you will feel frustrated and you will be disappointed because nothing was accomplished.

(Continued on page 12)

Regularity in Prayer

We are told that “there is...a time to every purpose under the heaven.” While the Christian should pray “always” and “without ceasing,” by living constantly in the spirit of prayer and in the atmosphere of heaven and in recognition of a continuous need, he should also set apart special times for communication with God and permit nothing trivial to interfere. He should never cease to meet his regular appointments with his Lord.

This life is so complicated and strenuous that regular periods of retirement for meditation and prayer are absolutely necessary if we would maintain and increase our spiritual experience. We must often step aside from the dusty pathway of life’s journey, with its noisy and unholy traffic, and visit the green pastures and still waters of private prayer.

Israel was taught regularity in prayer by the morning and evening sacrifice, when the offering of incense upon the golden altar was a call to prayer. This custom was to be perpetuated in the morning and evening worship of later times, when the father, the priest of the family, should call the entire household to prayer at the family altar at the beginning and close of each day. Zacharias was ministering at the altar “at the time of incense” when the angel Gabriel came to announce the birth of John the Baptist. Heavenly messengers visit the homes where the altar fires are kept burning at regular seasons, and they should not be disappointed.

Concerning the early morning visit of the patriarch Job to the altar of prayer, we read, “Thus did Job continually, or “all the days” (margin). The psalmist sets apart seven regular times a day for prayer. He said, “Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of Thy righteous judgements.” Psalms 119:164. According to verses 147 and 148 one of

these seasons of prayer was held very early in the morning. “I am up before the dawn to pray, waiting for Thy promises; I awaken through the night to muse upon Thy word.” (Moffatt.)

Perhaps the best plan for regular private prayer is three times a day, as was the custom of David and Daniel. Both were very busy men, one being a king and the other the prime minister of a world empire. Daniel was the chief of three presidents who ruled over one hundred and twenty provinces with their princes. What great burdens of state rested on his shoulders and weighed on his mind continually! Yet he found time for three regular seasons of prayer each day and permitted nothing, not even his envious foes or the den of lions, to interfere with his practice.

Morning, noon, and night are the most natural times for prayer. Every morning there is a renewal of physical life, and there should also be a renewal of spiritual life. We should see the face of God before we see the face of men. We should breathe the atmosphere of eternity before we enter upon our earthly and transitory occupations. At noon there is a natural break in the day’s program, with a little time to enter the closet and confess the mistakes of the morning and ask for help during the afternoon. The evening brings another break in life’s duties and responsibilities.

The prayer in the evening is of a retrospective character. At that time we look back over the day that has

just passed. We confess the sins committed, and ask forgiveness. We also thank God for the blessings of the day and for the work accomplished with divine aid. We express our gratitude for divine guidance and wisdom. We then commit ourselves in childlike faith into the keeping of our heavenly Father, who “will neither slumber nor sleep” in His vigilant watchcare over His children. Evening is the reckoning time, when the account is settled and the books are balanced, with pardon written over against all our offenses.

The Median king noticed that there was an excellent spirit in Daniel that was not found in the other wise men and counselors of the realm. He appreciated his kindly manner, his unfeigned integrity, his firmness of principle, his consistency of life, which shed a fragrant influence upon all in the court. He could not help connecting his character with his religion and his habits of devotion.

The world has a right to judge us by the same standard. Let us pray regularly that our lives also may shed a fragrant influence whether we serve in positions of trust and leadership or in the most humble walks of life.

Taylor Bunch

[Reprinted from *Prevailing Prayer*, Copyright 1946 by Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C.]

The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer, nor those who say they believe in prayer, nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important, very important, and pressing, but still less important and less pressing than prayer. There are people that put prayer first, and group the other items in life’s schedule around and after prayer.

S. D. Gordon, *Signs of the Times*, May 18, 1920



O, loving God, may we never forget,
 Imperfect although it may be,
 How lucky we are to live in this land,
 Still the home of the brave and the free.



To Thee, and our country, we owe a great debt
 For the rights and the freedoms we share;
 Please give us the insight and spirit to be
 Always grateful, and ever aware.

Virginia I. Dare



Prayer for the Fourth of July

Morning Prayer

From crown of my head to soles of my feet
 I give to Jesus my being complete.
 For guidance and wisdom throughout this day,
 Every step that I take, every word that I say.
 Help me treat others as I'd have them treat me
 And as I forgive others, Dear Lord, forgive me.
 Temper each word and act with Thy love
 And give me the wisdom that comes from above.
 Keep me from sickness, accidents and sin
 And help me be patient and kind to all men.
 Give faith and hope, I humbly pray
 With courage and strength throughout the day.
 I thank Thee for life, for home and love,
 For food and raiment—gifts from above—
 For Jesus who died to save me from sin,
 For life everlasting through His name. —Amen.

Anonymous

Hymn for a Household

Lord Christ, beneath thy starry dome
 We light this flickering lamp of home,
 And where bewildering shadows throng
 Uplift our prayer and evensong.
 Dost thou, with heaven in thy ken
 Seek still a dwelling-place with men,
 Wandering the world in ceaseless quest?
 O Man of Nazareth, be our guest!
 Lord Christ, the bird his nest has found,
 The fox is sheltered in his ground,
 But dost thou still this dark earth tread
 And have no place to lay thy head?
 Shepherd of mortals, here behold
 A little flock, a wayside fold
 That wait thy presence to be blest—
 O Man of Nazareth, be our guest!

Daniel Henderson

Poem for a Child Who Slept Too Long

Where were you, little pumpkin head, when the new day came and the sheep were fed?
 Where were you, little dandelion, when the sun came up and sent the moon a-flyin'?
 Where were you, little tiger's dream when the wind caught the clouds in a silver stream?
 I'll tell you where, little feather-haired elf: you were up stealin' sleep off a summer shelf.

Norman Disher

From Rags to Riches

One day Queen Victoria visited a paper mill owned by one of her subjects, and the owner was happy to show her through the great plant, explaining in detail the different processes of manufacture. During the journey through the factory she was taken into a large room filled with rags. They were in bins, in bales, and in huge piles on the floor. Some of them had been brought in by rag pickers and were filthy and dirty. These were being sorted and processed by the workmen.

“Do you make paper of these?” the queen inquired.

“Yes, our best paper is made from rags,” the owner explained.

She seemed to be in deep thought, then revealed what had been going through her mind. “But how can these dirty rags ever be made into clean white paper?”

“We have washes,” the guide explained, “which remove all the dirt and grime. We have chemical processes too, Your Majesty, by which every bit of color is removed from even these red rags.”

A few days later the queen was surprised to find on her desk a neatly-wrapped parcel, which on opening she found contained some of the whitest, most beautiful paper she had ever seen. On each sheet were her name and a watermark of her likeness. There was also a note from the man who had shown her through the paper mill.

“Will the every sheet visit to our also allow me understand how the Lord Jesus can take the poor sinner, and the vilest of the vile, and make them clean; and how though their sins be as scarlet, He can make them white as snow. And I can see how He can put His own name upon them; and just as these rags, transformed, may go into a royal palace and be admired, so poor sinners can be received into the palace of the Great King.”



C. L. Paddock

[*Signs of the Times*, May 1, 1951; used with permission.]

A little boy who read the promise that the Lord would blot out sin, went to his mother and asked: “Mother, what does God mean when He says He will blot out my sins? What is He going to do with them? I can’t see how God can really blot them out and put them away. What does it mean—blot out?”

The mother, who is always the best theologian for a child, said to the boy, “Did I not see you yesterday writing on your slate?”

“Yes,” he replied.

“Well, fetch it to me.”

He fetched his slate. Holding it in front of him, the mother asked, “Where is what you wrote?”

“Oh,” he said, “I rubbed it out.”

“Well, where is it?”

“Why, mother, I don’t know.”

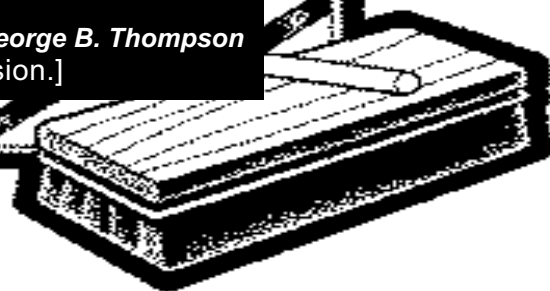
“But how could you put it away if it was really there?”

“Oh, mother, I don’t know! I know it was there, and it is gone.”

“Well,” she said, “that is what God means when He says He will blot out our transgressions.”

George B. Thompson

[*Signs of the Times*, August 10, 1920; used with permission.]



(Continued from page 8)

Exercise self-discipline. Set about accomplishing your tasks **now**, not later, proceeding from one completed job to the next. Be efficient; practice moving quickly, making each step, each movement count, as you go about your work. Avoid scattering your time and energy among many different things, which accomplishes little or nothing. Remain focused on the task at hand and on your goals for the day.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might...” Ecclesiastes 9:10. This says to me that I must not procrastinate! It also tells me that I must do the tasks that may be unpleasant, such as cleaning the miniblinds and ironing clothes—those are my least favorite jobs—as well as the easy ones, the ones I enjoy doing—rearranging the decor, for example.

Finally, there is clutter. Let us not fill our homes with so many items that we have no space around us. Personally, I need some space in order for my mind to function clearly! The more “things” we have, the more work it takes to clean and arrange it all. Simplify, simplify! Continually discard items, including clothing, that are no longer wanted or used; toss junk mail daily; as you read magazines and newspapers have scissors

handy and clip items on the spot rather than stacking them up, only to take up space while they wait to be sorted and looked at again.

No doubt there are many other things we might do or avoid doing that would help us to make better use of our time. I believe that God will bless our efforts to use wisely the time that He has given us. It is a precious commodity, a “talent” that He has given to us. Are we squandering it, or are we investing it for the Master? Please read Matthew 25:15-30, the parable of the talents. Are we “unprofitable servants,” “wicked and slothful,” or will the Master be able to say, on the day of reckoning, that we have done well, that we have been faithful stewards of the talent of time that He has entrusted to us?

Amanda Mallory

[Amanda Mallory is the pen name of the author]

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