

# Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 2, No. 2

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

Mar./Apr. 1999

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## The Word of God and Prayer

The church is engaged in a warfare in which she must “fight the good fight of faith.” Every Christian is a soldier clothed in armor and equipped with weapons for defense and aggressive fighting. The soldiers of the cross who put on the whole armor of God are assured of victory over the unseen hosts of darkness under the leadership of the prince of devils. “Therefore put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and, having fought to the end, to remain victors on the field.” (Ephesians 6:13, Weymouth) Christians are not on a playground, enjoying a picnic. We are on a battlefield, engaged in a fight to the finish. It is an all-out war. We occupy a fortress, not a pleasure house. The reward is promised only to “him that overcometh.”

In Paul’s picture of this spiritual conflict the Word of God and prayer are the only weapons for offensive, or aggressive, warfare. The various parts of the armor are for defensive

purposes only. The mighty “weapons of our warfare,” therefore, which pull down “strongholds,” “fortresses,” and unholy “imaginings,” and which bring “into captivity” straying and reprobate thoughts, are the Word of God and prayer. These two weapons of the Christian warrior are inseparable in the all-out battle for victory. One cannot be used effectually without the other. The Word is powerless without prayer, and prayer is ineffectual without the Word. The Word of God is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword” only when it is wielded by effectual, fervent prayer.

The program of the apostles is stated in Acts 6:4: “We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” The result of this plan is stated in verse 7:

“The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

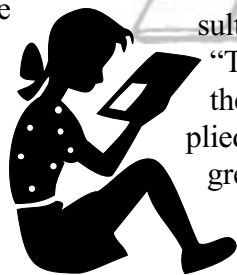
The same program will bring the same results today. The modern ministry is spending more time in serving tables than in study and prayer. No man can properly minister the Word without spending much time in the study of the Word,

and the Word ministered will produce little or no results unless seasoned with much prayer. When the church returns to the apostolic program, we shall see pentecostal results. Again the sword of the Spirit will be edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, so that it will cut its way through doubt and unbelief, and produce thousands of converts in a day. This experience will be repeated when leaders again give themselves “continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

Prayer and the study of the Word must be properly balanced, in order that they may be effectual. Too much study and too little prayer lead to formalism and legalism, to a cold, hard, dead, Christless religion. This produces a critical, exacting, self-satisfied, pharisaical spirit. On the other hand, the overemphasis of prayer to the neglect of the study of the Word

creates extremes and fanaticisms. Persons who follow this course are not controlled by the reason and judgment that come only from a knowledge of the Scriptures. Like many of the Jews, they have a zeal for God, but as Paul says, it is an

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## From Dream to Reality

*As the fourth issue of *Hearth to Hearth* goes to press our hearts are lifted heavenward in gratitude for the blessing it has been, not only in the lives of you, the readers, but in the lives of the editors as well. The dream began almost exactly one year ago. There was no doubt in our minds that the timing was Providential because of the way the doors opened for the project to begin. What at first appeared to be an impossibility soon, with God's leading, took shape as a reality. We give Him the praise for the reality that you now hold in your hand, and for the enthusiastic response we have received from you. So many of you have written letters of appreciation and encouragement, thus inspiring us to continue.*

*If there has been a disappointment on our part, it is that readers have not actively participated to the extent that we had hoped. We envisioned that *Hearth to Hearth* would provide a forum for women to share with each other, reader to reader. Perhaps, though, our vision was not God's vision, as you have not flooded our mailbox with original articles, poems, prayer requests, stories of answered prayer and other things that may be in your hearts and on your minds! We press on, continually asking Him to guide in the direction that we take with *Hearth to Hearth*, trusting that His purpose for it is being realized.*

*Again, you, the readers are invited to offer your suggestions regarding the content of the paper. Your participation, if God puts it in your heart, is solicited, and we ask for your prayers as we plan future issues of *Hearth to Hearth*. Our prayer for you, as always, is that God will guide and bless in your lives above all that you can think or ask; that you (and we as well) may experience your completeness "in him, which is the head of all principality and power." (Colossians 2:10)*

*Grace Cox*

### MAIL CALL:

I had never heard it said that character is the only thing we can take with us to heaven. It surely makes us want to have a good one when we pack up to leave here. I do think the woman that sold her grandmother's dishes in order to make room went just a little too far. [But] I have been getting some things put in the trash after reading about getting organized!

Sadie/WV

By chance would you have extra copies...which you could share? I should like to start at the beginning and keep a copy of each issue. The Lord bless you this year.

Marguerite/MI

[Editor's Note: Yes, we do have extra copies of all issues. We have sent the copies Marguerite requested, and we will be happy to supply others with back issues upon request.]

I want you...to know how much I appreciate your *Hearth to Hearth* paper. I liked your article on depression and the one on a prayer closet, but of course they were all good.

Juanita/CA

This newsletter is the best. Thanks for putting me on your list. Enclosed are some names and addresses of friends that I would like you to send it to also.

Sara/VA

[Editor's Note: We have added the names that Sara sent to the mailing list.]

I am very impressed with your newsletter. The layout is beautiful.

Bonni/GA

I got your magazines in the mail. They were great. I really enjoyed reading them. Thank you.

Robin/AK

Somehow, a copy of...*Hearth to Hearth* came into my hands...and I have enjoyed every word. It is an uplifting experience to read it. Please put me on your mailing list.

Helen/FL

I just received ... *Hearth to Hearth* and read it cover to cover immediately! Thank you so much; it is a welcome guest in my home! I especially appreciate the articles on organization, and the prayer closet idea is great! ... I sent my copy of [the last issue] to a friend in Georgia and she enjoyed it also.

Nancy B/TN

[Editor's Note: If you know someone who would like to receive *Hearth to Hearth*, you may send (or have them send) their name and address to be added to the mailing list. We welcome new additions!]

I have read ... *Hearth to Hearth* and find it very interesting and inspiring. I pray you will continue to send it.

Ann/OH

I am trying to reduce incoming mail and clutter in the house; also, I do not have time to read another paper. I am asking that you remove my name from your mailing.

Lois/OH

[Editor's Note: We are glad to hear from those who do **not** wish to receive the paper as well as from those who do. As we said in the last issue, it is our prayer that *Hearth to Hearth* be a blessing, not a hindrance, so we will cheerfully remove names from the mailing list upon request.]

Thank you for the lovely copies of *Hearth to Hearth*. ...I would love to receive them as you print them.

Nancy C/TN

Not meaning to sound authoritative on the subject of depression [see "Antidote for Depression," Vol. 2, No. 1], I'd like to say that if [Christians] today were as truly caring as the early church was in the days of the apostles we would be bearing one another's burdens and there would be less reasons for people to have reactive depression, and it might not last as long when it would occur.

Lorraine/PA

### NOTE OF THANKS:

We gratefully acknowledge those readers who have prayerfully helped with the costs of printing and mailing *Hearth to Hearth*. Without your support, we would be unable to continue this project. It is our desire that God will use this paper to His glory, and we earnestly covet your prayers—and your ideas—as we plan future issues.

## STRONG, GODLY WOMEN: PRECIOUS JEWELS

As I have studied the Biblical concepts of strong, godly women vs. strong, ungodly women, the difference has become clear to me. A strong, godly woman is a woman of high integrity and upright character whose words and actions spring from a love that is firmly rooted in solid Biblical principles. A strong, ungodly woman speaks and acts from entirely selfish motives in opposition to God's ways. In the Bible we are given many examples of women whom God especially fa-

Huldah, though little mentioned, was a well-known oracle during the time of Jeremiah.

In the New Testament we have Phebe who, in Romans 16, is described as a servant of the church, a succourer (or helper) of many. Dorcas, also, was a woman who provided valuable service to the early church. Paul credited Timothy's grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, for Timothy's faith (see 2 Timothy 1:5). They must have been strong, godly women

for example, loved not her own honor or her lover Samson's safety; she captivated only to destroy. Jezebel holds the distinction of being the most ungodly woman mentioned in the Bible. In Revelation 2:20, God describes her as a whore and a false prophetess. Ahab, king of Israel, did evil in the sight of the Lord when he united in marriage with this heathen woman who worshipped Baal. Jezebel was so wicked that not only did she completely dominate her husband, she also had many of God's true prophets murdered. She met her end at the hands of her own subjects. The entire sorrowful story can be found in 1Kings 16:31 through 1Kings 21:15; see also 2 Kings 9:7-37.

In 1 Timothy 2:12 we are told that the woman is not to usurp authority over the man. To usurp means to seize by force or to use power without the right or authority to do so. (*The Random House College Dictionary.*) God also has something to say about anger in a woman. "It is better to dwell in the corner of a housetop, than with a

**Mary, the mother of Christ, no doubt epitomized the strong yet humble, submissive character that God approves, as He entrusted to her His only-begotten Son, the Savior-to-be of the world.**

vored because of their dedication to Him; women who had His spirit and were used mightily by Him.

Deborah, in Judges 4:4-14, was a prophetess that judged Israel. The people came to her with matters under dispute. This strong, godly woman, in her roles as prophetess and judge, was directed by the Lord to help and to govern her people. At Barak's request, she even accompanied him into battle against Sisera the captain of the Canaanite army. Other examples of strong, godly women in the Old Testament include Ruth, who possessed a noble, loyal character and Esther who, along with beauty and a keen intellect, possessed a strong yet humble character. Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, was a prophetess, though she battled with self-exaltation and a critical spirit. The Lord dealt with her, however, and she repented of her error.

who brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied prior to his birth. And Mary, the mother of Christ, no doubt epitomized the strong yet humble, submissive character that God approves, as He entrusted to her His only-begotten Son, the Savior-to-be of the world.

**Satan has gained a foothold in our lives when we allow ourselves the "pleasure" of an angry spirit for it destroys our compassion towards people.**

The Bible tells of other women who exhibited strength and who exercised authority, but who did so in a manner that was displeasing to God. These were strong, ungodly women who spoke and acted from entirely selfish motives. Delilah,

brawling woman in a wide house." (Proverbs 21:9) "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman." (Proverbs 21:19) An angry woman is not a pretty sight. Satan has

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# ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A “WINTER”?

It’s summertime. I’m swelteringly hot and sticky as I write this in my non-air conditioned home sauna-office in Tennessee.\* But it’s only for a season. It won’t be long and the beautiful autumn weather will be here, and then it will be winter with cold and snow. Oh how I love the seasons. We don’t have time to get bored with one season before the next one arrives. However, God didn’t give the seasons just for variation. He gave them for a purpose. In Genesis 8:22 it says, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” (NKJV)

God gave us springtime to sow our seeds, summer to tend and water them and autumn to harvest our food for the winter and the rest of the year. This is a God-given principle that He has set in the earth. It is as old as the creation of the world. But how many of us live by it today? We no longer need the seasons. We rely on our high tech society of computerized power, water and transportation to supply the supermarkets so we can purchase what we want from day to day. Because of cold storage and air transportation from other countries, we can enjoy all kinds of fruits or vegetables all year long. This is very convenient and saves us a lot of thought, time and effort. But here comes the crunch: Can we totally rely on this lifestyle?

In recent weeks, I have been re-thinking my current lifestyle. This was triggered by reading material on the coming Y2K scenario.\*\* There are many who believe that this millennium bug could trigger a world wide recession and cause people to be without daily necessities of power, water and fuel for up to six months or longer. Others feel that it may only be a slight hiccup in our modern daily lives. I cannot foretell what is going to happen, but I have had to ask myself the question: If we were without power, water or heating for any reason, and for any length of time, would I be prepared? To my shame, I had to answer, “No.”

Is this practical wisdom? No. But just a minute, you say. Why prepare for months ahead? Shouldn’t we just trust God? Yes, our very breath is in His hands. But let’s get to the nitty gritty. Those who say those words are usually trusting in the supermarket for their daily necessities. If food were depleted from the shelves of our well-stocked supermarkets, would they still speak the same lingo?

Certainly we must put our trust in the Lord. This should be our attitude with every breath that we breathe. But God has established seedtime and harvest to enable us to make provisions for months ahead. If we fail to store from harvest, we violate the way God has planned to provide for us. In Proverbs 6:6-8 God tells us to go and have a look at the ant who “gathers her food in the harvest.” The Living Bible translation says the ants “labor hard all summer, gathering food for the winter.” God says that we are wise if we emulate them.

Proverbs 10:5 (NKJV) says, “He who gathers in summer is a wise son: but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.”

Proverbs 22:3 (LB) says, “A prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.”

From the beginning of time, generations have provided for their families by working hard to harvest and prepare food for the coming year. Most of you have enjoyed Laura Ingalls Wilder’s books. After working hard and preparing all summer and autumn, harvesting the vegetables, the corn and the wheat, she tells us in *Little House in the Big Woods* that “Winter was not far away. The attic and the cellar were full of good things once more, and Laura and Mary had started to make patchwork quilts. Everything was beginning to be snug and cozy again.” They were ready for another winter and to face another year.



Most people don’t even have time to plant gardens in this hectic fast food society. Others live in apartments where they have no space to plant. What should we do? Throw up our hands and hope for the best? No. I believe that we should all prepare in some way. We should do what we can. Most of us don’t have the finances to go out and buy six months’ supply of food; however, we can gather little by little and prepare for “winter.” I don’t mean only the winter season that follows harvest, but also the “winter” of adversity that we could very well face in months or years to come for whatever reason.

The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 “brings her food from afar.” Not only does she plant and store from her harvest but also she brings in food from other

sources. She looks for bargains. She makes sure that her pantry is well stocked to face the “winter” ahead. Because she is prepared, she is not afraid or biting her fingernails. She laughs at the future.

Now that I have been re-programming my brain to think of providing for a “rainy day,” my eyes are now open more than ever for bargains. I would encourage you to do this also. When you see canned goods that are on special and they are the kind of food your family enjoys, buy extra. In fact, each time you purchase an essential item, buy two – one to use and one to store.



Gradually invest in dehydrated foods that last for years. If you have a dehydrator, you can dry your own foods. You can preserve fruits and vegetables.

I always have loads of wheat and other grains and beans on hand, but will now continue to store more. I think that wheat is a marvelous food source as you can make so much with it. However, I am now looking for a hand grinder! Of course, I won't be using my hand grinder unless I have to. I love the convenience of turning on the switch when I grind my wheat freshly each day. Besides wheat, the other foods that I plan to have well-stocked are millet, brown rice, soy beans and other varieties of beans.

What about your water supply? Water can be cut off for many reasons, and what a blessing to have water on hand. You can live without food or with little food for a few weeks, but you can't go longer than three days without water. Why not start purchasing extra bottles of water? When you have spare plastic bottles, rinse them out, fill with water and store in your basement. Some people like to purchase 55 gallon drums and store water.

What about alternative heating? Do you have a kerosene lamp? Do you have loads of extra candles? Do you have extra batteries? Do you have extra toiletries? This list goes on and on. The main thing is re-programming your brain. The more I think about it, the more I realize how unprepared I am. However, I am gradually, limited finances permitting, preparing for whatever lies ahead in the future. I don't want to be unprepared for my family.

Many people are so accustomed to daily purchasing from the supermarket that they think that storing food for uncertain times or a natural disaster is ridiculous. Actually, this is more abnormal behavior than preparing your household for unexpected natural disaster or for the year ahead. In times of adversity (when food and

water are scarce) that person or family becomes a liability. They will have to rely on others for help. The more people who prepare, the less problem in a community, and the more we can help one another without one person being drained. We are either part of the solution or part of the problem. I would much rather be part of the solution, wouldn't you?

Of course, this all takes extra work and effort. But what does Proverbs 6:6 say? “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.” Ants are the most laborious insects in existence, and the most highly industrialized. They work untiringly until their work is done. Not one of them exists without a definite job to help meet the needs of all. They also work together in amazing systems of organization to the best good of the whole community. The Bible tells us that they do all this without being told to by a guide or overseer.

Proverbs 27:23-27 says, “Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.” Diligence pays off, and this diligent family reaps the blessings that they will have: “lamb's wool for clothing” and “enough food for their household.”

Does all this seem overwhelming to you? Do you feel that you can hardly cope with your daily needs, let alone store extra? Don't be daunted. Seek the Lord and He will give you wisdom and understanding. As you look to Him as your source, He will show you what to do and He will lead you to bargains for essential items. God understands our frailty and again He reminds us of the ant. Proverbs 30:25

(NIV) says, “Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer.”

They don't manage this task because they are big and strong, but because they are diligent and persistent.



God will not forsake you. “For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Isaiah 41:13.

*Nancy Campbell*

[\*Written July, 1998. Used by permission of *Above Rubies*, PO Box 681687, Franklin, TN 37068-1687. Please note box on following page.]

**\*\* WHAT IS Y2K?** Y is for year, 2 is for two, and K is for 1,000—Year Two Thousand. What’s the problem? Back in the 1960’s when every bit of space was valuable in mainframe computers, computer programmers shortened the date to save space; e.g., 1968 was shortened to 68. At that time they didn’t think of the future. The problem now is what will happen when the date turns to 2000? Computers will think it is 1900 which could have devastating consequences. Thousands of computer programmers are working to change hundreds of millions of lines of code to remedy this situation. But will they make it on time? Many will, but many won’t. There is also the problem of non-compliant computers affecting compliant ones.

Mainframe computers are not the only problem. It is estimated that there are 25 to 50 billion embedded chips worldwide. Only two to five percent of these are date sensitive, but to find out which ones, they would have to check everyone. This is hardly possible, so we could be in for some surprises.

For further information and understanding on this issue, here are some Internet addresses:

<a href="http://www.y2kwomen.com">www.y2kwomen.com</a>	<a href="http://www.senate.gov">www.senate.gov</a>	<a href="http://www.mtmarketplace.com">www.mtmarketplace.com</a>
<a href="http://www.audiocentral.com">www.audiocentral.com</a>	<a href="http://www.2yknews.com">www.2yknews.com</a>	<a href="http://www.survival-center.com">www.survival-center.com</a>
<a href="http://www.cbn.org">www.cbn.org</a>	<a href="http://www.year2000.com">www.year2000.com</a>	<a href="http://www.the.moneychanger.com">www.the.moneychanger.com</a>
<a href="http://www.garynorth.com">www.garynorth.com</a>	<a href="http://www.yardeni.com">www.yardeni.com</a>	<a href="http://www.y2kchaos.com">www.y2kchaos.com</a>
<a href="http://www.mcalvany.com">www.mcalvany.com</a>	<a href="http://www.y2kprep.com">www.y2kprep.com</a>	<a href="http://millennia-bcs.com/prep.htm">http://millennia-bcs.com/prep.htm</a>

If you are not on the net, here are some books to track down and read: *Time Bomb 2000* by Edward and Jennifer Yourdon and *The Millenium Bug* by Michael Hyatt .

There are people who feel that coming economic problems and the Asian Financial Crisis are more disturbing than this possible millenium bug. It is time to prepare, but not to fear! God is in control and everything is in His plan. It’s all on His calendar. We can rejoice. Put your life and the lives of your children in God’s hands. You can trust Him completely. He will not fail you or forsake you. —Editor, *Above Rubies*

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unenlightened zeal. If we would be well balanced Christians, we must rightly proportion study and prayer.

Prayer is communication, or conversation, and calls for a division of the time between the two who converse. It is always impolite for one person to do all the talking and monopolize all the time. The same is true in our communings with God. He talks to us through His Word; we talk back through prayer. The Lord does not want to do all the talking, nor does He want us to be so rude as to consume all the time and refuse to listen to His voice.

The apostle Paul speaks of a class of professed Christians in the last days who have “a form of godliness” but deny “the power thereof.” Religion must have form and organization, but form without power is like a body without life. It is God’s Word that gives us a knowledge of true religion. It tells us what He requires of us and what our conduct should be. But it is prayer that puts life and power into our religious experience. It puts the spirit of Jesus into the doctrines of Jesus. Otherwise our spiritual experience is like a valley of dry bones. Prayer makes us kind and sympathetic toward others. It subdues the nature and gives us grace to live out the golden rule.

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

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gained a foothold in our lives when we allow ourselves the “pleasure” of an angry spirit for it destroys our compassion towards people.

The use of harsh words, arbitrary authority, domineering oppression and all self-seeking is as “strange fire” offered before the Lord. Let us instead, at all times, manifest the character of Christ, His love and mercy, His righteousness; for this is “sacred fire” that will ascend before God as fragrant, holy incense.

God has precious counsel for the woman who desires to be a strong, godly woman. The virtuous woman depicted in Proverbs 31:10-31 is a woman of integrity and uprightness. She is not slothful but works untiringly for the well-being of her household. She portrays the woman that God would have each of us be—a strong, godly woman whose inner beauty manifests the character of Christ. She exhibits the blended attributes of Martha and Mary, being willing to minister and also sincerely loving the truth. Self and selfishness are not seen in her. She is a priceless jewel.

*Debbie Lewellen*

[Debbie writes from her home in east Tennessee. She is a wife and mother who enjoys reading, writing, traveling and crafts. In addition, she is actively involved in her family’s automotive business.]

# Changing Times — Changeless Principles

Because times have changed so drastically since the era in which it all began, it is with some hesitancy that I endeavor to relate a few experiences of my married life. Though times have changed, I believe the principles that make for contentment in marriage have not.

In 1934, the year of our marriage, the great depression was in full swing. We did quite a bit of canning before our marriage, even to the harvesting of a large pear tree that was offered us by a friendly church family. Having some food in storage was a big help in starting our life together, as money was scarce. We often traded eggs for



groceries that first year. I was a city girl, but Ken was a farmer, so we went into sharecropping. We, in other words, leased a private farm home and raised crops; raised milk cattle and sold milk and raised chickens. Our allotment was one-third of the income from the

sale of our products. It was up-hill going, but we were happy.

From the beginning of our married life we had morning and evening worship, and we continued this practice throughout the years. The most important aspect of our marriage was our love for God and our faith and trust in Him. Next was the love we shared and our faith and trust in each other. We were constantly together in everything we did, whether working in the fields and driving the team of horses; planting, harvesting, shocking and husking; or mopping floors and other household chores. While he was threshing or silo filling I was preparing food for the workers. It was a neighborhood activity—the neighbors all joined in to help each other.

In the winter we fixed fences, cut down trees with the old crosscut saw, and sawed and chopped wood for our stoves. There was no electricity in most of the rural areas in those days—it was just starting to be available in some regions of the country—so we needed wood for heating our home and cooking our food.

My husband wanted to work for the Lord and it was not long before he began to talk about entering the colporteur ministry, as it was called in those days. (A “colporteur” was one who sold Christian books door-to-door and as he did so, he witnessed to people about the love of Christ, and prayed with them if they were agreeable.) I agreed that this was what he should do. When

our one-year lease on the farm was up we moved to a small town, and he attended his first colporteur institute where he received some training to prepare him for that ministry. By that time we were expecting our first baby. While he was away during the day selling books, I spent much time diligently studying the Bible and other Christian writings in order to obtain knowledge that would enable us to train our child for the Lord.

When our second child was a baby we moved to another farm. This time it was a truck farm, so we grew garden produce and apples which we sold door to door in Janesville, Wisconsin. We had a regular route in the elite part of town where we catered to the customer’s every desire. It was more work, but worth it. Again it was a sharecrop arrangement. As before, we worked together, taking the children with us to the garden where we could keep a check on them and they could be outside in the fresh air. It was hard work, but we loved every minute of it as we greatly enjoyed working together.

Eventually our family grew to four children, two sons and two daughters, then later to five when we adopted another son. We tried to provide a variety of activities for our children as they were growing up. Often we took them on outings to study nature, God’s “other book.” Reading together was given a very special place in our home, and today all of our children love books. Outdoor games, such as baseball, were included in our activities. We picked wild berries

together and canning season found all the family from the youngest to the oldest with aprons on preparing fruits and vegetables while Daddy manned the stove and jar filling.

Saturday nights were special “game times” with the children, and we made popcorn, polished apples and sometimes made fudge to eat while playing Dominoes, Scrabble or other educational games. Our home was always open to their friends and playmates who, when present, were invited to join our family worship. I believe that television has



robbed many a home of such togetherness. Families today, as always, need more special times together.

The evening worship always included the children, and those times when Daddy had to be absent because of travel time from working at a distance, Mother and the children had that time together; usually followed by reading together. The children never tired of it. When there were problems that their father and I needed to discuss, we waited until the children were in bed asleep and then talked the situation over quietly. In later years, I heard my missionary-daughter say to a friend one day, “I never heard my parents quarrel.” We always presented a united front in matters pertaining to the discipline and activities of the children. Consistency is very important. A promise made

should be a promise kept—whether it produces a sad or happy occasion.

As the years progressed, our way of life varied and we could not always work together as was our choice. Ken went back into colporteur ministry for a time, then he went to work as a jobber—sometimes called a middleman or wholesaler—purchasing merchandise in quantities from wholesale houses and selling to merchants.

Our children attended church-operated schools. I was hospitalized one time while two of the children were in grade school and two in academy (a religious boarding high school.) Fortunately, our children were able to live at home and our eldest daughter, who arrived home from school before the other children, proved to be very capable of running the home.

Like many other wives, the day came when I had to go to work to help keep our children in church school. So my working days began; first in a hospital, next as a doctor’s assistant, then a dental assistant and from there to a baker in a health food factory. There was a variety of jobs, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed.

During all of the intervening years we were vitally interested in each other’s work and activities, but my husband was longing for us to work together again. He went to his boss, the owner of a large publishing house, and had a talk with him. Thus it was that we were united again, in the advertising and layout department of that company, as advertising representatives of a weekly newspaper.

We were only human beings and I know we made plenty of

mistakes, but our close relationship saved us from many a pitfall I am sure.

Times have changed from the early days of our marriage, but we also shared many of the experiences which people today face. I’m sure these are faster and more difficult times; however, the principle still remains: What time you have together, share, share, share with each other and the children. Be interested in each other’s experiences. Talk them over and help each other with decisions and responsibilities. Take time for the children. Share financial problems with each other. It is wrong to try to “spare your mate heartache” by not discussing them together. Those who have financial problems need encouragement and help when things are tough and two heads are better than one. Silence in this situation can bring about misunderstandings and lead to serious relationship problems—even to separation and divorce.

After 80 years of living, I really believe that the happiest marriages are those in which husbands and wives put God first, spend time together and communicate freely in a positive, uplifting way. Let them relate to each other in a giving and forgiving manner, each putting the other first. Last, but by no means least, they must continue the small attentions that endeared themselves to each other in the first place. Yes, times have changed, but principles remain.

*Mattie Laurell*

[Mattie Laurell is an octogenarian who as a widow makes her home with her daughter and son-in-law in Chunky, MS. She spends much time in Bible study and reading.]

# FROM THE MIRE TO THE SKIES!

(A Hummingbird Story)

As I was walking along a country road, pondering a nature story to share with a Vacation Bible School class, I came across a hummingbird lying in a rut in the road. I picked up the tiny creature and cuddled it in my hand. Though still warm, its limp, mud-covered body appeared lifeless. I decided to take it home and give it a proper burial.

All of a sudden the tiny body seemed to flutter ever so faintly!

I thanked the Lord for the lovely experience with the hummingbird and for the spiritual lesson gleaned from it.

Immediately I remembered that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father's notice. (Matthew 10:29) I started praying for this helpless little hummingbird and headed home with it. Instead of a corpse to be buried, I now had a miniature patient to doctor!

Arriving home, I quickly made a mixture of water and honey and dabbed drops on the long slender beak. I took this opportunity to measure him. He was just two inches long and his wing span was two and one-quarter inches. I was sure

the bird was a male because of his brilliant ruby red throat.

In just a little while my patient began to revive. After several more drops of water and honey, he flew into a plant in the living room and rested. Evidently my patient had merely run out of fuel. If left unattended he surely would have died. When I sensed that he was about ready to be on his way, I gave him a going-away present of some pure,

golden honey, and then took him outside. In just a short time he flew from my hand, performed some vigorous

acrobatics as if to assure me that he was fine, and flew away.

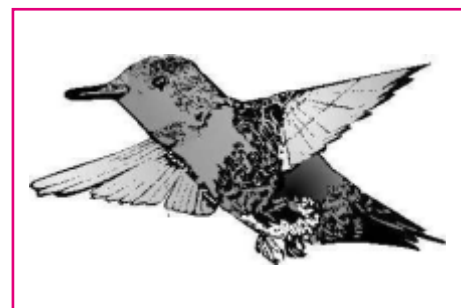
I thanked the Lord for the lovely experience with the hummingbird and for the spiritual lesson gleaned from it. We all, at one time or another, have found ourselves in the mire of sin. With the muddy stains of sin on our characters and with no strength of our own, we too were perishing. If not found by Someone whom God sent to our aid, we would be without hope, but God so loved us that He sent his only-begotten Son to rescue us; and if we believe on Him, He will

give us eternal life. (John 3:16 paraphrased.)

Just as the hummingbird received strength and life from sipping the honey and water mixture, we receive spiritual nourishment from feeding daily on the heavenly manna—God's Word. Then we, like the tiny hummingbird, will one day be ready to soar off into space to meet Jesus when He returns to take us home with Him. May each one of us purpose in our hearts to feed on God's precious, life-giving Word, thus developing a Christ-like character. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)

*Ann Ford*

[Ann is a wife, mother and grandmother. She writes from her home in West Virginia where she is very active in Smyrna Gospel Ministries. She enjoys homemaking and various crafts, and especially the study of God's Word.]



# Parable of the Candles

There was a blackout one night. When the lights went out, I fumbled to the closet where we keep the candles for nights like this. I lit four of them. I was turning to leave with the large candle in my hand when I heard a voice, “Now, hold it right there.”

“Who said that?”

“I did.” The voice was near my hand.

“Who are you? What are you?”

“I’m a candle.”

I lifted up the candle to take a closer look. There was a tiny face in the wax.

“Don’t take me out of here!”

“What?”

“I said, Don’t take me out of this room.”

“What do you mean? I have to take you out. You’re a candle. Your job is to give light. It’s dark out there.”

“But you can’t take me out. I’m not ready,” the candle explained with pleading eyes. “I need more preparation.” I couldn’t believe my ears. “More preparation?”

“Yeah, I’ve decided I need to research this job of light-giving so I won’t go out and make a bunch of mistakes. You’d be surprised how distorted the glow of an untrained candle can be...”

“All right then,” I said. “You’re not the only candle on the shelf. I’ll blow you out and take the others!”

But right then I heard other voices, “We aren’t going either!” I turned to the other candles, “You are candles and your job is to light dark places!”

“Well, that may be what you think,” said the first one, “You may think we have to go, but I’m busy...I’m meditating on the importance of light. It’s really enlightening.”

“And you other two,” I asked, “are you going to stay too?”

A short, fat, purple candle with plump cheeks spoke up. “I’m waiting to get my life together, I’m not stable enough.”

The last candle had a female voice, very pleasant to the ear. “I’d like to help,” she explained, “but lighting the darkness is not my gift...I’m a singer. I sing to other candles to encourage them to burn more brightly.”

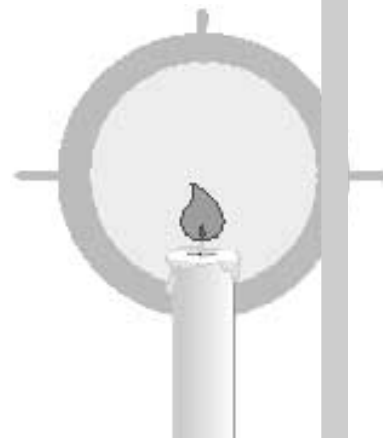
She began a rendition of “This Little Light of Mine” The other three joined in, filling the closet with singing.

I took a step back and considered the absurdity of it all. Four perfectly healthy candles singing to each other about light but refusing to come out of the closet.

Here is a question for you, when was the last time you shared the gospel with someone? This world is full of darkness, with many people stumbling around trying to find their way. You can be a light for them, and believe me, there’s a light waiting for you. It can all happen with something as simple as sharing your faith, to just a smile across the room, to a quick hello to a forgotten friend.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

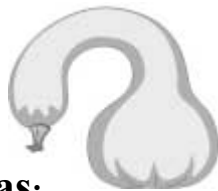
*Author Unknown*



# Rules for Your Character Garden

## Plant Three Rows of Squash:

- Squash gossip<sup>1</sup>
- Squash criticism<sup>2</sup>
- Squash indifference<sup>3</sup>



## Plant Three Rows of Peas:

- Purity<sup>4</sup>
- Patience<sup>5</sup>
- Perseverance<sup>6</sup>



## Plant Six Rows of Lettuce:

- Let us be unselfish and loyal.<sup>7</sup>
- Let us be faithful to duty.<sup>8</sup>
- Let us search the Scriptures.<sup>9</sup>
- Let us not be weary in well-doing.<sup>10</sup>
- Let us be obedient in all things.<sup>11</sup>
- Let us love one another.<sup>12</sup>



## No Garden is Complete Without Turnips:

- Turn up for church, prayer meetings, Bible study.<sup>13</sup>
- Turn up with a smile even when things are difficult.<sup>14</sup>
- Turn up with determination to do your best for God's cause.<sup>15</sup>



<sup>1</sup> James 3:6 <sup>2</sup> Matt. 7:4 <sup>3</sup> Matt. 22:5  
<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. 7:1 <sup>5</sup> James 5:7 <sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. 15:58  
<sup>7</sup> Matt. 16:24 <sup>8</sup> Luke 19:17  
<sup>9</sup> Acts 17:11 <sup>10</sup> Gal. 6:9 <sup>11</sup> John 14:23  
<sup>12</sup> 1 John 4:7 <sup>13</sup> Heb. 10:25  
<sup>14</sup> Prov. 17:12 <sup>15</sup> Rom. 12:1

## Yesterday's Homeplace

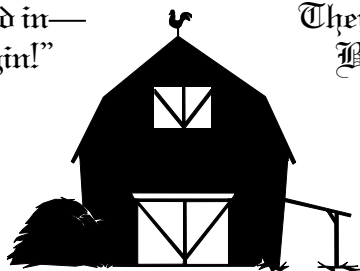
The house was small, sitting in an open field, alone;  
 Smoke, curling out the top giving a warm hello.  
 Things smelled good as you walked in—  
 "Just wash your hands and do begin!"

Everything was from the yard,  
 Beans and peas, eben chard.  
 Mother was the best cook around.  
 That was known all over town.  
 Her secret was love in fullest measure,  
 And that was our greatest treasure.

A barn was needed for the cow and mules;  
 There was also a shop for all of Pa's tools.  
 Their helpers required hay and shouted commands  
 In the days before tractors with all their demands.

The buildings lean more with the weight of snow,  
 Old gray boards are loose and about to go.  
 They have been there this long, and stood the test,  
 But time is closing in and wind will do the rest.

To get the seed planted took all day,  
 But back then there was no other way.  
 God has blessed man with a wonderful brain  
 To plan ways to feed the whole world grain.  
 He watches over me and others, too.  
 Thank you, Lord, for our daily food.



Marilynn Dick

[Marilynn is an avid reader of *Hearth to Hearth*. She is a wife, mother and grandmother who makes her home in west Tennessee. In her homespun poetry she describes many aspects of life, past and present, and uses poetry as as one way of sharing her deep faith in God with others.]

# Snowflakes

What a mighty God I have,  
So full of beauty and love,  
To give us nature's finest  
Sent right from heaven above!

*P.S.Kroeger*

As I sit and wonder  
At the handiwork of God:  
Snowflakes dancing carelessly  
Fall to the frozen sod.

A million tiny crystals  
Sparkle through the silvery night,  
Like an untold wealth of diamonds  
Shining in a streetlamp's light.

The miracle of a raindrop  
Feeling winter's icy touch,  
To form the lacy pattern  
And design of the Master's touch.

So infinite in number  
And not two of them the same,  
Reveal a deepest mystery  
Of the Source from which they came.

[Pat Kroeger lives with her husband and son in Kentucky. She is a technical support person for a national software company and enjoys writing in her spare time—poetry, articles, Bible studies and songs.]



Sing me the night with its pale golden light,  
Sing me the soft evening air.  
Sing me the morning, its beauty adorning  
With melody radiant and rare.

Sing me the rose and how sweetly it grows,  
Sing me the children at play.  
Sing brightly the birds with harmonious words  
That rise and go winging away.

Up through the skies let the melody rise,  
Joining a million-voice choir.  
Sing adoration to God of Creation,  
Rising still higher and higher.

Sing me the glory, rapturous story  
Of joy that waits me above—  
Joy like the river that flows on forever—  
Sing me of God and His love.

*Herman T. Roberts*

## Hearth to Hearth Ministry

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