

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 2, No. 6

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

Nov./Dec. 1999

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The Embroidery Lesson

When I was a little boy, my mother used to embroider a great deal. I watched her work within the boundaries of the little round hoop that she held in her hand. I would wonder why she was using some dark threads along with the bright ones and why they seemed so jumbled from my view.

I would sit at her knee and look up from the floor and ask what she was doing. She informed me that she was embroidering. I told her that it looked like a mess from where I was, the underside. She would smile at me, look down and gently say, “My son, you go about your playing for a while and, when I am finished with my embroidering, I will put you on my knee and let you see it from my side.”

A few minutes would pass and then I would hear Mother’s voice, “Son, come and sit on my knee.”

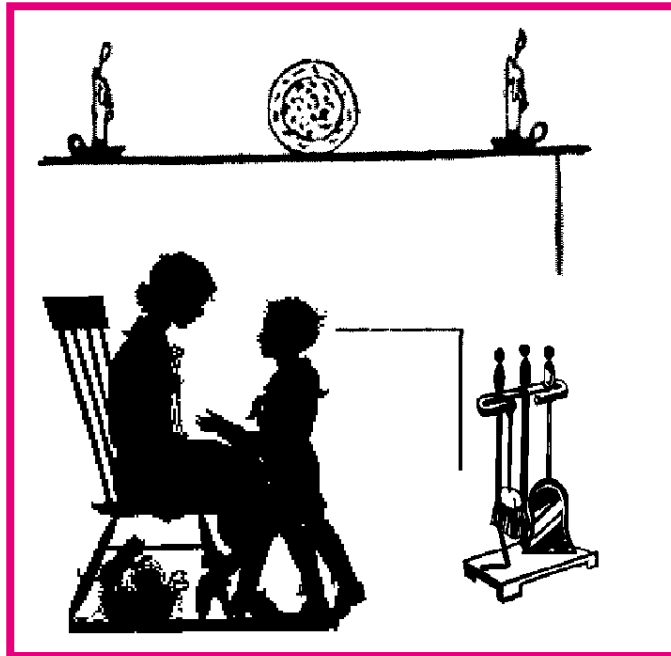
This I did, only to be surprised and thrilled to see a beautiful flower or a sunset. I could not believe it, because from underneath it looked so messy. Then Mother would say to me, “My son,

from underneath it did look messy and jumbled, but you did not realize that there was a pre-drawn plan on the top. It was a design and I was following it. Now look at it from my side and you will see what I was doing.”

Many times through the years I have looked up to my Heavenly Father and said, “Father, what are You doing?” He has answered, “I am embroidering your life.”

I say, “But it looks like a mess to me. It seems so jumbled. The threads seem so dark. Why can’t they all be bright?”

The Father seems to tell me, “My child, you go about your business of working for Me, and one day I will bring you to Heaven and put you on My knee and you will see the design from My side. Then you will understand.”



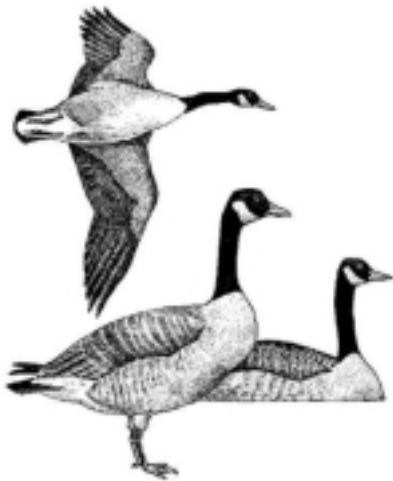
Author Unknown

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.

Wild Geese and a Lesson in Love

One late fall day a few years ago my husband yelled from outside for me to come quickly and watch a flock of wild geese passing overhead. As we watched, the lead goose dropped back and another moved forward to the head of the V. The lonely sound of their honking faded into the distance as they flew beyond our southern horizon, following a path invisible to human eyes. I cannot explain it, but the sight and the sound of the geese caused some bittersweet emotion to well up within me and my eyes brimmed with tears. I remembered reading that if a goose becomes over-tired or ill and cannot continue its flight, another one also goes down to the ground with it and stays with it. What wonderful care and concern for each other is manifested by wild geese! As humans, we can learn many lessons from the lesser members of God's creation.

Certainly God, who is even aware of the falling of a sparrow, is mindful of our plight when we are in difficult circumstances, and has promised to never leave us or forsake us. Often, however, He causes His presence to be felt through the ministry of other human beings. Would that in the human family there will always be at least one who will "go with us to the ground," stay with us and refuse to allow us to suffer alone! With the exception of the "Hearth Circle" feature, that, basically, is what this issue of *Hearth to Hearth* is about.



With the holiday season and the beginning of winter upon us, the thoughts and plans of many are centered on the wants of themselves and their own families, festive food preparations and elaborate home decorating. There is nothing wrong with thinking of our families, planning good, healthful foods for any occasion and making our homes attractive in ways that are thrifty, tasteful and pleasing to God. Instead of focusing on those things in this issue, however, we wish to allow God to draw our attention to the needs, both great and small, of others. We have a solemn obligation before God to share with others according to the way God has blessed us. Let us not forget that it really is "more blessed to give than to receive," and "...unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke 12:48) During this Thanksgiving Season, let us remember, and give thanks, that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

In "Hearth Kettle" there are several personal experiences that individuals have chosen to share with us. May they inspire each of us to give willing, joyful service to God in the person of His children who are hungry, cold, sick, or hurting—and waiting for someone who will go with them to the ground and stay with them, refusing to let them suffer alone without help or hope.

Grace Cox

MAIL CALL:

There is something I would like to share or add to "Small Attentions, Oft Repeated" [see *Hearth to Hearth*, Vol. 2, No. 5, Sept./Oct. 1999 - Ed.]. I love to listen to scripture songs or the Bible on tape while I'm working.... This makes any job a breeze!
Barbara/AR

Thank you so much for remembering me with the copies of *Hearth to Hearth*. They are really inspiring. Keep up the good work.
Lillian/TN

Hearth to Hearth came last Thursday; I had been looking forward to it. The article, "Looking to Jesus" made me think of the experience I've been having with my lawn mower. After trying to get it started for ever so long, I will think that I have to give up. Then I'll say a little prayer, "Dear Lord, please let this lawn mower start," and then it does.
Sadie/WV

Please send *Hearth to Hearth* to the following [list of names] as well as to myself. I would like to receive any back issues, especially [the one containing] "Prayer: Heavenly Altitude = Ardent Attitude." I truly enjoyed all the articles [in the issue I have read]. Keep up the good work!
Linda/TN

Thank you for *Hearth to Hearth*. I am going to arrange them in a binder.
Frieda/CA

Thank you for sending all the issues of *Hearth to Hearth* since Sept/Oct 98. My wife and I read and appreciated them. Please continue. Good courage in your publication; tell it like it is and you'll go far!
Rey & Joy/Canada

PRAYER CALL:

Please remember our pastor's son in your prayers. The doctors found a tumor in his spinal cord and were able to remove most, but not all of it. He is 17 years old. The tumor had partially paralyzed him but God is good and he is up and around again though still in need of prayer.
Esther/MS

READER TO READER RESPONSE:

This letter is from another searching reader in response to Diane, the searching reader in the July/August 1999 issue of *Hearth to Hearth*.

I do believe that we were put here to love God and other people. It is very hard for me to love certain people who did me harm. I do feel very empty inside and have for a long time. I don't have a

Stewards of Mercy and Means

Satan is a vigilant watcher and worker, and seeks to intercept every ray of heaven's light in order that it shall not come to the soul; but Christ is also working, and by mercies given, and by mercies withheld, he seeks to lead men and women to look above the earthly to the heavenly and eternal.

Every man is intrusted with capabilities, with a stewardship for the great Householder, and he is to look to the great Counselor for directions and for wisdom.

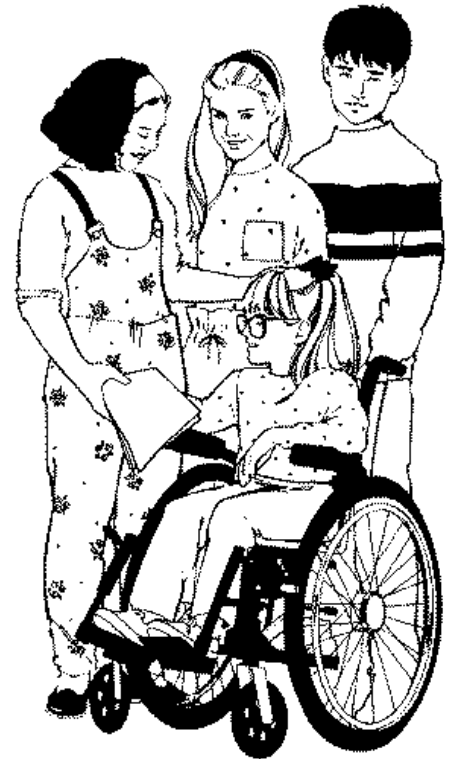
Christ would have his servants work for those who understand him not; for he looks with infinite compassion upon the human family under the deceptive wiles of Satan. He sees them employing their God-given probationary time in seeking everything but the one thing essential. The voice of Jesus pleads with men, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." [See John 7:37 and John 4:14.]

No creature that God has created is looked upon with indifference. God has an intense desire to relieve the woes of mankind and apply his balsam to their wounds. His love is ever exercised for the needy and oppressed. His heart is full of joy when the sinner breaks with Satan, and looks up to God as to a merciful, sympathizing, loving Father. Jesus declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." [John 5:17.]

The Lord is ever active in exercising his mercy; he would have every soul become acquainted with the paternal character of God. When men obtain a correct view of the unceasing mercy of God, they will be attracted, and by beholding will become changed into the same image.

Those whom God has made stewards of capabilities and means, he commands, for their own interest, to lay up their treasure in heaven, and as he has given freely to them of his bountiful mercy, to give freely to others. Instead of living for themselves, Christ is to live in them, and his Holy Spirit is to lead them to dispense wisely their goods, being merciful to others even as he is merciful to all. No man can be a follower of Christ and live for himself. The Christian is to be an agent for God, dispensing his blessings to others, and thus laying up for themselves treasure in heaven. His treasure will thus never be lost, but will ever accumulate increasing interest, and a good foundation be laid against the time to come.

[*The Signs of the Times*, 09-12-1895; used with permission.]



church. I was once deeply involved and part of a group in ... Ohio many years ago. What happened? Each of us had different directions to go; mine was family, and I started having health problems. Then sin entered my life and I was lost. I was in depression at that time and didn't know how to handle certain situations. Lately I really feel a lot of fear and sometimes it has control over me. Sometimes I am afraid to go upstairs by myself to my bedroom. I don't know what to do about it. I have always felt a lot of fear—of the dark, dogs, and different things.

I feel separated from my brothers and sisters in Christ. I lack transportation. I am "low income" and can't afford to do a lot. I do have a deep spiritual desire to do more, and know what I should do, but don't have the materials, or know how to begin. Yes, I do think these feelings are part of our God-given desire to love and be loved; God is reaching out to us. How one can [share love] is by spreading the good news in any way one can. Go door to door with books and pamphlets; invite people to enjoy Bible study or to come join you [for study].

The one scripture verse that keeps me from falling apart is Joshua 1:9 ["Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."] I love scripture songs; music makes me cry sometimes. I miss the studies and fellowship a lot. Without God we are nothing. If it weren't for God we wouldn't be here. Please keep me in your prayers. Thank you for listening. Pat/OH

In response to Kathy's thoughts regarding the "World Church of the Creator" I would just like to say that I had never heard of this group. Obviously their "creator" and my Creator are two very different beings. When we see our Creator as He really is, then He can return to claim us for we will be like Him. (See 1 John 3:2.) Let's take a close look at what "our God" is like and see if it measures up to the descriptions of the *true God* which are found in the Scriptures so we can start reflecting the genuine Article! Let's get rid of our false views of what God is like. I'm with you, Kathy; I want to go Home!

Esther/MS

Looking Well to Our Ways

Among the many wonderful attributes of “God’s Perfect Woman” described in Proverbs 31, are compassion and generosity toward the poor and the needy. “She looketh well to the ways of her household” (vs 27) and in so doing she evidently makes provision within her household budget, and in the use of her time, for seeing to the needs of others for, “She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.” (vs20)

As women, it is usually our responsibility to plan ahead for the comfort and needs of our households by the purchasing of food, clothing and household supplies of all types. I have noticed that some women have a wonderful ability to “stretch the dollar.” They seem to have enough and some to spare out of their household budgets at all times, while others barely get by though the amount of money they have may be larger. Likewise, some use time in such a way that they are able to accomplish all their work with time left over while others struggle to keep abreast of the myriad tasks that threaten to overwhelm them.

Many of us are preparing our households for what the future may hold as far as weather-related emergencies or even “Y2K.” As Christians, however, selfishness should play no part in such preparations. We need to look well to the ways of our own households but, just as importantly, we must remember the fast that God has chosen: “Is it not to deal [share] thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” Isaiah 58:8. In the verses following many promises are made to those who observe the fast that God has chosen.

All of us have something that we can share, even if we don’t own much of this world’s goods or have much money at our disposal.

All of us have something that we can share, even if we don’t own much of this world’s goods or have much money at our disposal. If Jesus could take five barley loaves and two small fishes and provide food for a multitude of at least five thousand, surely He can take what we have and multiply it to meet our needs and to help those whom He sends our way—especially if we heed His admonition to the disciples to “Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.” (John 6:12) May we let those words of our Savior rebuke our wasteful,

extravagant ways and cause us, also, to “gather up the fragments.” “Use it up, wear it out, make it do” is a wise, timeless motto that we would do well to live by in this age of “throw it away and replace it with the new, improved or more stylish version.”

In John the Baptist’s sermon in Luke, he counseled the multitude to “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance...every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” Luke 3:8, 9. In verse 10, “... the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?” His answer in verse 11 was, “He that hath two

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coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.”

There are many kinds of need within our midst. While the need for adequate food and clothing and shelter is critical in some areas, there are other needs, just as critical, in all places. The need for loving sympathy and understanding is universal. It is easy to love and understand those who are just like ourselves, but we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (see Leviticus 19:18 and Luke 10:27).

The question was, “And who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) In answer, Jesus told the story of the Samaritan who befriended and rescued the unfortunate man who had fallen victim to thieves and was lying helpless by the road. He was ignored and left to die by the priest and the Levite who were unwilling to help him, perhaps for fear of “defilement” in case he were already dead. Instead, he was shown mercy by a stranger—by one who was willing to inconvenience himself, to take the time—who didn’t hesitate to get his hands dirty, to spend his own money and perhaps even to go into debt in his behalf. “‘Which now,’ Jesus asked, ‘of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?’ And he said, ‘He that shewed mercy on him.’ Then said Jesus unto him, ‘Go, and do thou likewise.’” (Luke 10: 36, 37)

This parable teaches me that my neighbor is anyone who is in need. I must choose whether I will allow the priest and the Levite to be my role model, or the Samaritan whose actions were approved by Jesus. It also reminds me

(Continued on page 12)

MEASURE OF SUCCESS



When sunset falls upon your day and fades from out the west,
When business cares are put away and you lie down to rest,
The measure of the day's success or failure may be told
In terms of human happiness and not in terms of gold.

Is there beside some hearth tonight more joy because you wrought?
Does someone face the bitter fight with courage you have taught?
Is something added to the store of human happiness?
If so, the day that now is o'er has been a real success.

Author Unknown

God Gives

- God gives us joy
■ that we may give,
- He gives us love
■ that we may share.
- Sometimes He gives us
■ loads to lift,
■ That we may learn
■ to bear.
- For life is gladder
■ when we give,
■ And love is sweeter
■ when we share.
- And heavy loads
■ rest lightly too,
■ When we have learned
■ to bear.

Author Unknown

Thank God for Little Things

Thank you, God, for little things
That often come our way,
The things we take for granted
But don't mention when we pray,
The unexpected courtesy,
The thoughtful, kindly deed,
A hand reached out to help us
In the time of sudden need—
Oh make us more aware, dear God,
Of little daily graces
That come to us with "sweet surprise"
From never-dreamed-of-places.

Helen Steiner Rice



The Human Touch

'Tis the human touch
in this world that counts,
The touch of your hand
and mine,

Which means far more
to the fainting heart
Than shelter and bread
and wine:—

For shelter is gone
when the night is o'er;
And bread lasts
only a day,

But the touch
of the hand and
the sound of the voice
Sing on in the soul away.

Spencer M. Tree

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS

Little bits of garments that would keep a baby warm;
Little bits of room that would shield him from the storm;
Little bits of love the baby wants to meet;
Little bits of teaching to guide his little feet.

Just a little letter some lonely heart to cheer;
Just a little courage for those that faint and fear;
Just a smile of welcome for the guest that's in our home;
Just a word of pity for the child that longs to roam.

A gentle word of warning to guide the wanderer home;
An earnest prayer of longing for those that err and roam;
A verse of Holy Scripture to cheer the doubting heart;
A song of Zion's city for those whose teardrops start.

Here a little, there a little, when we meet in heaven,
And not before, we'll know the joy our trifles may have given.
Here a little, there a little—who would count the cost?
Then "gather up the fragments," that nothing may be lost.

Elizabeth Rosser

Love in

“Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.” (Psalm 41:1)

It was a cold, winter day and as the temperature dropped the drizzling rain turned to snow. My husband and I decided to make a quick trip to the mall before the roads iced over. As we turned into the mall parking lot I noticed a young man and woman and a very old car that appeared to contain everything they owned. He was standing by the car, shivering in the falling snow, holding a sign: “Will work for food.” It was a pitiful sight and it tugged at my heart causing me to ask my husband to stop the car. The young man approached the car as I rolled down the window. He said that they did not live in the area and were trying to earn enough money for food and for gas to get home. We did not need any work done around our house but, knowing that Jesus taught us to share with those who are less fortunate, I found myself reaching into my purse. I gave him the few dollars I had, hoping that it would help them a little. He thanked us and

we drove on.

My husband is usually quiet and doesn't say much and, true to form, he had not said anything during my brief conversation with the man holding the sign. Though he only attends church with me on special occasions, I know he believes in Jesus Christ as his Savior. We had gone only a little way when he turned the car around. “That boy looked like he was freezing to death,” he said. Stopping and getting out, he took off his coat and put it on the boy. “You need this coat more than I do,” he told him. The young man was speechless. I looked back in the mirror as we drove away and he was waving to us. We never saw him again, of course, but I hope in some way he realized that there are people who care and are willing to share God's blessings with others.

Name withheld by request

“He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.” (Proverbs 22:9)

During the 1960's my father worked for a plumbing company. Much of his work was in the housing projects in the area where we lived. Often elderly people or people with young children lived in the apartments, and most of them had very little, not even enough, food. Frequently, after finishing the repair jobs, he would go and purchase groceries for these families. Many of them offered to repay him but he would never accept any payment. My dad was not attending church at this time, but he believed in God and in Jesus and he just practiced his religion in a different way. I think at that time his church was inside himself. After he got older, though, he was baptized and joined the church. His manner of living never had to change as he gave generously of what he had until he died.

Name withheld by request

“...man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” (Deuteronomy 8:3)

My husband went to Japan for a month to help with plans for a petrochemical plant, and I went along. When our stay was over, we headed to the airport on our way home. The airport bus was so crowded with passengers that we could not find seats together for the long ride. I sat next to a lovely Japanese lady whose English was perfect. She told me she worked for a large Japanese company and had traveled all over the world.

A dear friend in Luling who belonged to the Gideon Bible Society had given me a lovely, small, blue Bible with

instructions for me to give it to someone in Japan. Until now I had not met a person to whom I felt led to give the Bible; but from the beginning of my conversation with this Japanese lady I kept thinking, “Is this the one, Lord?”

As we got off the bus at the gate I turned to her and said, “I have a special Book for you,” and handed her the lovely little Bible. She looked at it for a long moment and in a surprised voice finally said, “Why, it is a Bible!”

She walked away from me, so involved in reading that she didn't even say good-bye. When I last saw her she was still

A Modern Widow's

I hope this experience that I've written will be used to help someone in need and to bring glory to my Heavenly Father and His Son. This typewriter that I am typing on was a gift, an answer to prayer. We serve such an awesome God who cares about our smallest needs. Not a week goes by that I am not amazed at His generosity.

May we all be ready to go home! Two of the most important things that I've come to understand are these: 1) To realize our own sinful condition; 2) To realize God's amazing love. Only then will we be able to give that love to others. It is in seeing God's unconditional love in my sinful life that enables me to give the same.

You have heard the familiar saying, “What goes around comes around.” When we were young children, it seemed that it usually referred to bad things you did—they would come back to haunt you! Keeping this thought in mind, but applying it in quite a different way, I'd like to share a wonderful blessing I received.

After the death of my husband various people sent money to help my family through the transition. Our youngest child was only seven weeks old when I received the news of my husband's death, so we were very much in need of the generosity of those whom God used to bless us.

It was mid-summer at the time, hot and dry. Our spring water was about dried up. The money we received was desperately needed for a well, and, as in times past, God had provided for our needs. We had planned to visit family in Tennessee, and have the well dug upon our return. This is where God began for us a most amazing experience of His love.

As we pulled off the Interstate onto the exit ramp there were two men asking for food, money or anything to help them. My first thoughts aren't worth repeating. As I drove by, however, the Spirit of God spoke to my heart. “Who are you to be passing judgment on these men? My love rains on the just and the unjust. Haven't I helped you in the past when you really didn't deserve it?” These thoughts kept plaguing my mind as I drove away. I promised God that, if the men were still there after I finished grocery shopping, I would help them.

We stopped by the bank and drew out some money. Upon returning to the exit we saw that only one man was there. That was strange! I knew God had prompted me to

Action

holding the Bible in her hand, reading as she moved along the boarding line. The Lord was touching her heart through the words of her new Bible. I can't wait to talk to her when we get to heaven!

It does not matter where in the world you go, God is there, caring for each of us. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel..."(Mark16:15) Are we willing? "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." (John 3:27) "Dear Lord, Please help us to share Your Word wherever You lead us. Amen"
Marilynn/TN

"Elijah Experience"

withdraw two separate sums of money. I will never forget that man's face—his look of unbelief mixed with relief. I was so glad the Lord had given me the opportunity to share in His project of love. My daughter Glenelle couldn't understand what the other money was for. I asked her to just put it in my purse and told her God would show us where the money was to go.

On our trip to Tennessee, our van developed major problems costing approximately \$1500.00 to repair. Between these repair costs and my helping the man at the freeway exit our well fund was drying up as fast as our spring. I resolved in my mind that God was leading me and that He was in control! I would trust His word to do what it said.

That Sabbath there was an appeal for help for a needy family in the church. As soon as the call was made my daughter came rushing into the nursery where I was tending the baby, confirming my own thoughts. Here was where the Lord wanted this other money to go. What an exciting Sabbath! My daughter and I were experiencing God's love in action.

Our visit came to a close. My three small children and I were on the way home, a seven-hour trip. What an exhilarating time!

Opening a stack of mail after a long vacation is not my idea of fun but, somehow, God can change the boring things we do in life into actual fun things. This day the mail was awesome! All the money spent on gas, food, auto repairs and our gifts of love—our well money—had been replaced; God had given back everything I had given away! Then I knew how the widow of Zarephath in Elijah's day must have felt when her "barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord..."(1 Kings 17:16)

What an awe-inspiring lesson I learned: God wants you and me to be willing to help others even if it looks like we will have to do without. Here lies the opportunity for God to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing. God had used me to help two of His precious children and then used others to help my family.

How many blessings do we forfeit because of our lack of trust that God will do what His word says? My heart aches to learn more of God's love. For me, this experience showed the positive side of "What goes around truly does come around."

Mittisse Westerbeck/NC

*"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over..."
(Luke 6:38)*

I work for a nursing home. Most of the time it is rather depressing as the people are admitted to spend their final days. Occasionally, however, someone is admitted for rehabilitation. That is always nice, as I know they will recover and go back home before long. A certain lady, whom I had known before, was admitted for rehab. I knew that she lived solely on Social Security and some food stamps with Medicaid for her medical care. State law required that most of her Social Security income be paid to the nursing home before Medicaid would pay. This did not leave her enough money to keep up her utility payments at the small trailer where she lived. I tried to keep her bills paid for her while she was at the nursing home, but there simply was not enough money in her account. She was discharged sooner than expected, which was nice in a way, but I just didn't have the heart to tell her that she didn't have enough money to pay her electric, water and telephone bills. I knew she had to have these services; even the telephone would be very important to her in case of an emergency. As soon as she left the nursing home I dashed to the bank and paid them for her. She called me several days later and pressed me to tell her if I had paid them. I suppose she realized that someone must have done so! I finally confessed to her that I had paid them myself as I knew she didn't have enough money to pay them. She spread the word in the trailer court where she lived about the good deed that someone had done for her. I really could not afford to pay the bills myself but I felt that she needed the money worse than I did. Somehow God must have stretched what I had because I never actually missed it. I received at least two blessings from the experience: the good feeling that comes from helping someone else, and the blessing of increased faith because God took care of my needs too.
Name withheld by request

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35

On one of those bitter-cold days last winter I had a chance to help someone in an unexpected way. On a quick trip to pick up extra groceries, as I pulled onto the highway, I noticed a red truck stalled on the opposite secondary road. I also noticed a young man walking around the ditch on the side of the road, so I pulled up and asked him if he needed help. An icy wind tore into my face as I opened the window and I could see he was very cold. He said he needed water for his truck and was trying to get some from under the hard-frozen ice in the ditch, with little success. I replied that I usually had water in my car because I like to buy bottled water, and I was assuming that there were big plastic jugs of Deer Park in the trunk. I checked the trunk and was surprised to see that I didn't have any at all, then remembered having taken them out to make room for groceries. I kept digging around in the trunk and found a bottle of Perrier, rather expensive sparkling water from France, and handed it to him. "Do you think your old truck will mind drinking Perrier?" He laughed and said he would give it a try. I drove off to shop, said a quick prayer for the young man, and when I returned a few minutes later his truck was gone. I said "Thank you, God; I love your sense of humor." Not only did He allow me to help someone but He arranged it so I had to make a small sacrifice, too. I drove home imagining the young man telling this funny story to his family and friends.
Kay/TN

(Continued on page 9)

God's Biddings Are Enablings

“Our baby has been sick for several days with diarrhea and my wife is worried about her. Do you think your daughter could take my wife and me and the baby to the hospital emergency room?” It was a young father speaking—a college student. My daughter, Verna, was the registrar at Solusi College in Zimbabwe at the time, and since she had a secretary, an assistant and several others working for her, I knew she could get away so I assured him she would be glad to.



Mrs. Chambala and her baby who started it all.

On the way to town I asked the baby's mother some questions. I noticed she always looked at her husband and he answered me. I asked if I could hold the baby and he translated to her what I said. She handed her to me over the back of my seat. As soon as I looked into that sweet, smiling face, I knew she wasn't as sick as they thought. I told Verna to take them to the medical clinic instead of the hospital. The doctor examined her and gave them a prescription to have filled.

We parked across from the chemist (drug store) and the father got out and hurried across the street with the prescription. I quickly caught up with him and asked whether his wife would like me to help with her English. He excitedly assured me that she would.

Verna and I did a little shopping of our own, and the little family waited in the car. When we returned, as soon as I opened the car door the mother said, “I'll come! I'll come! I'll come!” and we set a time for her first lesson.

Monday morning when Macrina arrived with her baby on her back, she had a friend with her so I had two English students. The next day they brought two others who wanted to learn English, and then two more, and soon the class had grown until there were so many that I could no longer teach them at the house. I was teaching them by using body language, pictures, artificial fruits and vegetables, dishes, silverware, kitchen pots and pans, utensils, etc. I had never taught anything before except kindergarten in church and a baptismal class.

With the number of students multiplying so rapidly, I took my burden to God in prayer. I told Him that I hadn't expected all of this when I offered to help Macrina, and now He would have to help me. Then things began to happen!

My son-in-law, Harold, who was academic dean of the college, arranged for me to use a room at the elementary school and I was allowed to use the school supplies as well. In my new surroundings, my first concern was that they learn how to talk to the nurses at the clinic about their children's illnesses. The nurses were having a terrible time understanding them.

Next I taught them how to shop, as every business activity is in English (British). Many of the students were wives of ministers so they needed to know how to entertain, how to greet people and make them feel welcome, how to invite them home after

church and converse with them.

We did some role playing on the correct way to set the table (British and American); greet someone at the door, invite them in and make them feel comfortable; how to awaken husband and children in the morning and have them prepare for breakfast and school. They also needed to know that a minister's wife is expected to do many other things besides entertain. We did a lot of role playing regarding these things. They were taught to write letters. We had “show and tell” to help them get used to public speaking. Verna loaned me some little science books on various topics. I passed out the books and assigned the topics to the students. They were to read the short explanations and be prepared to tell the class what they read. They were hungry for knowledge, and learned quickly. I was amazed at how well they did. Others were frequently asking to join the class, but we were too far advanced for that and it was apparent that I needed to start another beginner's class.

In 1990 when we returned from furlough, Harold, since he scheduled all classes for the college, set aside a two-hour period in the college English room in the education block (building). He also made arrangements for me to use a room in the administration building for the new class of beginners. At about the same time, Georgia Watson, head of the English Department, came



Mattie pictured with about half of her students

to see me. “There are some books in my office,” she said. “I thought you might like to use them. The college no longer uses them since we no longer accept those who do not know English.” She gave me a copy to look at.

I was thrilled! The books started very simply. “Birds fly,” was the first sentence, and it explained about subjects and predicates. The teacher’s manual explained that when one completes the book he/she will be on the level of a high school graduate. That was more than I could imagine.

It was my practice to teach them spelling. Each day I would write on the board any new word we used, as well as new words from the book. Then I would go down the list, pronouncing each word and telling the meaning. Next I asked them to pronounce the words and tell the meanings with me. They were to study them for the next day when we would repeat the process and have a new list. The following week I gave them a test and they corrected their papers. They were drilled on the ones they missed and were given a new list.

The students’ husbands often stopped me on campus to ask about their wives’ progress and to tell me how pleased they were that their wives were learning English and the other things as well. One husband said, “I’m going to send my wife to the academy (thigh school). With her English, I know she can do it.”

It was extremely gratifying to me to feel that my efforts were making a difference in the lives of these women and their husbands. I realized that it was only through God’s enabling that His bidding was accomplished, and I was grateful for this opportunity to work hand in hand with Him. There were many methods used that have not been mentioned here which He showed me how to do.

Would you like to do something for God? Would you like to be in partnership with Him? Study your Bible. Get to know Him through earnest prayer and supplication. Talk to Him and tell Him of all your weaknesses and desires and how much you need Him. Express your desire to do something for Him but that you don’t know how or what. Ask Him to show you what you can do for Him. Your prayer will be answered! Remember, God never gives us something to do without giving us the ability to do it; He will help you. Keep close to Him. Pray often and earnestly, and remember always to give Him the credit, and ask Him to keep you humble and teachable.

Look around you. Are there any new babies? Check the newspaper for hospital admissions and discharges, accidents, etc. Jesus tells us in James 1:27, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” He will lead you and help you. God’s biddings are enablings.

Mattie Laurell

[Mattie Laurell writes from her home in Chunky, MS where she resides with her daughter and son-in-law, Esther and George McDaniel.]

(Continued from page 7)

“Because thou has been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.” (Psalm 63:7)

On this particular day I planned a trip to the post office in a nearby town to mail some items. It was important to me that they go out before noon but, try as I might, I was unable to leave the house until early afternoon. Once I reached the post office, mailing the items was a rather lengthy process, and I was busy at the table when an elderly lady came in to buy a money order. The postmaster prepared the money order for her, told her the amount due, and she handed him an envelope containing the money. Then she began rummaging in her purse, becoming increasingly agitated. Finally she spoke out loud. “What has happened to all the rest of my money?” she exclaimed. “The bank must have not given me all of my money when I cashed my check. What am I going to do? I have no more money for the rest of the month!” The postmaster carefully checked the contents of the envelope she had given him and counted the money out again to show her that she had given him only the amount needed for the money order.

“Why don’t you go back to the bank,” I suggested, “and explain to them what happened? I feel sure they will make it good.” My mind raced as she became more distraught. “Lord, what can I do to help her?” I breathed silently. “Should I go with her to the bank and try to help her explain to the teller?”

In troubled resignation she turned to leave and, as she did so, I saw a small green wad lying on the floor by her feet. “There it is! Your money! On the floor by your feet!” I almost yelled in my excitement. Visibly relieved, she picked it up, thanked me for noticing it, and left.

Had I not been there exactly when I was she would have walked away leaving her money on the floor. The next person who came in might not have been honest enough to show it to the postmaster and ask if someone had lost it. “Thank you, God, for preventing me from going to the post office this morning,” I prayed. “Thank you for making sure that I was here when she came in; for using me to help this dear person.” Grace/TN

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” Ecclesiastes 11:1

My husband does not attend church though I keep praying that he will. I know that he does believe in God and in Jesus Christ our Savior; he simply has not yet decided to give his life to Christ and live for Him. He has demonstrated that he has a good heart, however. For example: One day as I came home from work I saw a man dressed in a suit walking from our yard toward the nearby freeway. I asked my husband, who was working outside, who the man was, and learned that he had run out of gas on the freeway. He had walked down to our house and asked if he might buy enough gas to get to the gas station at the next exit. My husband gave him a gallon of gas, refusing, over the man’s protests, to accept payment. He said the man told him he had never before experienced such kindness. My husband told him to just toss the gas can over the guardrail and he would retrieve it. Later my husband went to get the can, actually not expecting to find it. Not only had the man left the can as promised—there was a ten-dollar bill stuffed into the spout! I know both men were blessed out of the kindness shown to each other.

Name withheld by request

Where Is My Child's Heart?

Part II (Conclusion)

Who has my child's heart? What has their affections? Is it heavenly or earthly? Look at what is on their bedroom wall. Is it a weird sports hero? Is it some ugly music group, muscle men or fashion queens? It ought to be you! Their affections are on this stuff instead of you! With whom do they spend their time? With associates of the mindset you see on the wall? Why are they attracted to these associates; to these ugly things of earth? It's often because they are accepted as they are by these associates and they want to please them by liking what they seem to like.

They have a need to belong, to feel a part of something.

Since you weren't around to be interested in them or direct them, the world had more time for them. As a result they gave their time and affections (heart) to them. Since they didn't have a family they joined these drug fellows and learned to like what they liked.

This is so sad because it need not be so. Your child's walls ought to have some pleasant nature scene that reminds them of their special outing with you or the family, or some sweet animals, or some meaningful scripture verse. Their affections should be in the family and with Christ. They need to belong, to be loved; it should be in heavenly ways in their own home by their parents. Parents, it's up to you to bind their hearts to yours! Regain their hearts; let Jesus change your story.

If you gain their heart then their affections will be toward you. They will love to talk with you, spend time with you, work with you, play with you. Their greatest joy will be to be by your side. They will feel loved and appreciated and will desire to please you. Then they can discuss anything and everything with you; nothing will be a secret from you. They have found you to be so trustworthy that if you disagree on some matter they

know you have their best interest in heart, and they will work through the situation with a heart seeking for what is right. This is the fruit of spending much time with your child. They know they are a priority in your life.

On the other hand, a disrespectful, disobedient child gives evidence that the parent does not have their heart. Where did you lose your child's heart? Children want their parents' love, approval and support. Often the father is too busy elsewhere and has time for others but not for his child. The child gets the unsaid message that they're not important or loved, and a host of negative attributes come from the influence of that substitute associate who took your place. Do you want your son's, your daughter's heart back? Our girls as well as our boys need father as well as mother. Give them yourself, your time, not things! I believe all youth can be won back. Don't let the Devil make you think that yours can't be!

We have a war to fight; only with Christ can we do it. We are not warring against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities of darkness. See Ephesians 6:12. Satan wants the heart, the affections, the tastes, and

the thoughts of our children. Are you going to let him have them without a fight?

In order to possess their heart, to regain their affections, you must spend time with them. True love will cooperate with God and lead your children out of this Egypt of selfishness. No matter how much time and effort it takes, having your children's hearts with your heart in Jesus is worth all the effort. If you want them to know Christ, to know the joy of obedience, it's really up to you; no one else. If not you, who? If not now, when?

Start by making your children a priority in your life. Spend quantity and quality time with your children



every day. Ten minutes is not enough! If you don't, I'll guarantee Satan will provide someone to take your place and the associate will take your child away from you and God.

Father, work is not your life; your children are, and they need you to work with them, their hearts, their habits, teaching them the thoughts they should think, how to come to Jesus and be changed. Listen to their hurts, come to know their interests, and their thoughts. They deserve a goodly place in your time today—not tomorrow. Sacrifice all to have their hearts in yours and together in Christ's. Sell all to regain the lost and straying heart!

Many fathers today are deceived, distracted, thinking that their work is everything. It is nothing if you don't have your children! Just ask businessmen who have lost their youth to the world. Your children are wearying, waiting for father to have time for them. If you don't take heed soon they will not have time for you. Many premature marriages are made by youth striving to get the love they don't get at home.

Strangers are not to be given time and attention in preference to your children's needs. Stop! Listen! If you've been deceived with this misconception, correct it today. God's grace is sufficient for you to change your thinking and direction and His grace is sufficient for binding the hearts of your little ones, even your youth, to you today.

Admit your wrong course and correct it. Show your children, by your actions, they are the priority in your life. Yes father has to work to support the home, but come home and give yourself to them regularly in the evening hours; keep your promise to be there, to go camping, to go for a bike ride, and you will regain their hearts. If you fail to gain their hearts first they will not be interested in your Jesus or your rules of life. If you've wounded their hearts, only your actions can speak louder than your words and reverse your course. John 17:19 says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself..." You must change first, father, for the sake of your sons and daughters!

Mother, what keeps you from your children? The telephone, neighborly chit-chats, overwork or slow work habits, many trips to town due to lack of organization, or perhaps it's your inability to say No to others?

Even evangelism is to be secondary to raising your child to follow Christ. Change square about, call out to God, sort it out and follow as He leads you to correct your life today—now. Make your children your business, your priority.

Train up their thoughts and feelings in righteous ways. This is a good work that no one else will do if you don't. Telling them what is right is only half of this work. Training is the greater work that sees to it they do what they know is right. Training requires your calling out to God for instructions in how to deny the wrong thoughts and feelings and how to cultivate the opposite traits of character in divine power, not just human methods alone. Cultivation requires working up the soil of the heart and implanting goodly ways in place of the wrong. Training takes the child to Jesus for goodly thoughts to replace the wrong ones. On their knees they must surrender, then they must get up to act out the right. It's in obedience that their hearts, their thoughts, are changed by grace.

Jesus never intended you and me to do this heart work without Him; in fact we can't. The best humanity can get in behavior modification is outward conformity; without Christ the heart is not made new. So let Christ direct you in this warfare for their hearts.

In corrections, reproof, and even giving consequences for disobedience, you are saying to your child, "I love you too much to let you disobey. I will not let Satan have you. Come, let's go to Jesus to lay down the wrong and pick up the right." Home needs to be an oasis, a fortress

against the evil trends of this world, a loving place that upholds firmly God's ways over selfish ways. God in us, leading, can cleanse the music, dress, diet, hair styles in our homes and redeem these tastes and affections unto Himself and us.

If you do not give consequences and motivations, led of God, for disobedience you will lose their hearts to Satan and unrighteousness. Instead, give consequences, in Jesus, and gain the heart.

Go out and gain the hearts of your children and bind them to yours in Christ!

Sally Hohnberger

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(Continued from page 4)

that I, sorely bruised by sin, perishing and helpless to rescue myself, have been shown mercy. I am being rescued by One who was willing to come down to my level, to get His hands dirty, to become poor that I through His poverty might be rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). One who was willing even to die in my place that I might live.

As we look after the needs of our households, and as we reach out to help the poor and needy, let our children observe our ways of economizing in order to have more to share. They will thus learn by precept and by example to live unselfishly. As soon as the child is old enough to receive an allowance, teach him that it is not his to spend recklessly, but that he must plan wisely. The system of tithes and offerings was instituted not only to supply the means needed for the spreading of the gospel, but also to instill and perfect in us the principles of honesty and unselfishness. Teach the children that God, as Creator and Sustainer of all, has first claim on all funds that come into *their* hands as well as ours.

Teach them to be aware of the needs of others and to set aside a portion of their funds to be spent on others, both inside and outside the home circle. Instead of spending every cent on their own little wants, let them experience the joy of giving a small gift to a friend or family member and of participating in the larger cause of helping the needy.

Teach them to save toward their own future needs by having them set aside a portion of their allowance for this

purpose. Letting the children learn these lessons early in life—selfless economy and the denial of instant gratification—will save them much misery in their adult lives.

While ministering to the physical needs of the people, Christ always looked beyond the temporal to the spiritual; beyond the present to eternity. Let us do the same, not forgetting to impart the Bread of Life to those with whom we come in contact. “Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen...” (Isaiah 43:10) Paul says, “Ye are...declared to be the epistle of Christ...written...with the Spirit of the living God...in fleshy tables of the heart.” (2 Corinthians 3:3) Many souls are hungry for the Bread of heaven, thirsty for the Water of life, and some are not even aware of their need. Can they read Christ’s epistle in your life? in my life? Let us “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (1 Peter 3:15)

Amanda Mallory

[Amanda Mallory is the pen name of the author.]

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