

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 4, No. 3

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

May/June 2001

Keeping the Chase Alive: Practical Ways to Energize Your Marriage

Teena M. Stewart

A waiter ushered an elderly couple to a booth in a restaurant. The woman scooted over so her husband could sit alongside her and view the television screen on the opposite wall. But rather than take the seat she offered, he winked at her and plopped down across from his wife.

“I’d rather look at you,” he said.

His wife’s face glowed as she returned his smile. The brief exchange revealed volumes about their relationship. They knew how to keep romance alive!

Prince Charming and Cinderella Meet Reality

Movies, TV and books help shape our idea of romance. The characters in the stories are often beautiful. A 5’ 9”, 105-pound woman wears a gorgeous evening gown on an intimate date with her tall, dark and handsome boyfriend. He’s rented their favorite restaurant for a candlelit dinner for two. It’s the stuff from which dreams are made. Unfortunately, that’s exactly what it is, a dream. Hollywood has influenced our ideas of romance. Is it any wonder that after the wedding vows, couples have difficulty reconciling their preconceived notion of romance with reality?

When Cinderella and Prince Charming married, did they realize what lay ahead of them? Ever after is a very long time. What happened when they woke up the

morning after their nuptials with their hair sticking out at odd angles and breath that could knock an elephant over? Did their romance die on the vine?

On a TV game show, a celebrity guest caustically remarked that marriage meant the chase was over.

Glamorous Zsa-Zsa Gabor quickly retorted, “Nonsense Dahling. Zee chase isn’t over, it’s just begeeening.”

Zsa-Zsa was right. Once you tie the knot it doesn’t mean you no longer need to charm your mate. Before my husband and I married we were nauseatingly romantic, writing endearing, syrupy notes to each other, holding hands, and calling each other pet names. But when we said, “I do,” we assumed we no longer needed to impress the

other person. Slowly, we dropped our guard. The positive result was we became more genuine with each other and we could let our “warts” show. The downside meant we knew each other so well there weren’t

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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.

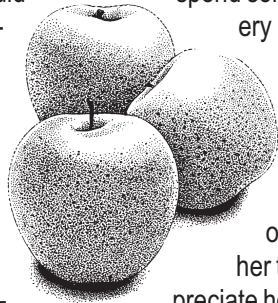
Editorial

“Apples of Gold”

“Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands. (Proverbs 14:1) These words from a recent morning devotional period captured my attention, triggering many thoughts and memories. Interestingly, God is specifically addressing women in this passage. Why are we so prone to tear down rather than to build up?

We were given the power of speech for the purpose of giving honor and praise to God. Every time we open our mouths to speak to others, it is an opportunity for God to be glorified through our words. And, as we face the judgment of God (see “Understanding God’s Plan of Redemption”), let’s keep in mind that “every idle word that [wo]men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” (Matthew 12:36)

Several years ago, a woman I know (let’s call her Sharon), had occasion to hire someone to do some construction work around her house—work that took a considerable amount of time. As he cheerfully went about his duties, they often found themselves discussing issues taking place in the church and in the nation. When she discovered that their families had much in common, she wanted to meet his wife and hoped that their families could spend some time together and become good friends. However, every time Sharon talked with her, either by phone or in person, she would tell Sharon all of her husband’s faults. It seemed there was nothing about him that pleased her. In comparing her projected image of him with the capable man that she had come to know, Sharon began to sympathize with the poor “hen-pecked” man. Her own devoted, faithful husband began to take a back seat in her thoughts while she fantasized that she would certainly appreciate her new friend much more than his wife did and give him the honor he so much deserved. She found herself being drawn to him, and could feel that he was becoming drawn to her as well.



One day God woke Sharon up to the reality of what was taking place in her life and she confessed her wrong to her husband. She expected him to throw the man out of their house and maybe even reject her for the wicked thoughts that she had entertained but, being the wise man that he was, he simply said, “Honey, I know you will handle it just fine.” What it cost him to say those words, we probably will never know, but because of his love for her, and his confidence in her, disaster was averted. Her love, appreciation and devotion for him exploded and she *did* “handle it just fine.”

What power there is in words! Let us, as wives, always speak words that build up our mates and keep any faults that we are aware of a private matter. Let us not be as the foolish woman who tears her house down with her words. As mothers, let us speak words of encouragement to our children and teach them by precept and example how to be wise in their relationships with others. As sisters and friends, let us always be careful to speak words to and about each other that foster spiritual growth rather than discouragement. Let us wisely remember that when we tear down others it does not speak well for us and we diminish ourselves.“

Let the words of my mouth...be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)

In all our day-to-day interchange with others, may all the words that we speak be words “fitly spoken...like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” (Proverbs 25:11)

Esther M. McDaniel

MAIL CALL:

In the Jan./Feb. 2001 issue, I was really touched by the “Invisible Treasure” in A Page from My Experience section, by Linda Spillan. One thing she said when she found the Bible was, “At first I did not understand what the words meant, but that did not matter to me. I had to consume all that I could from this book called the Bible. And I did with relish.” Although my experience is different in that I was raised a Christian, it’s not so different in that I, too, had to find Jesus, and when I did, the same hunger for Him was there. Beautiful article. AR

Take my name off your mailing list. I did not request it and I don’t want it. OR

The Jan./Feb. issue was so awesome I could not put it down until I had read every page. Recently I have also been blessed with another pen pal. Thank you and may God continue to bless all those making *Hearth to Hearth* possible. My husband enjoyed reading the articles this month, even though his expressed thoughts were, “I thought it was just for women.” (Smile) God loves us all. OH

I would be interested in receiving your newsletter titled, *Hearth to Hearth*. [A friend] gave me your address. Keep up the good work. AZ

I just had to write and let you know that all the effort that you have put in your newsletters is certainly worth it. Your articles are very timely, not only for the young woman but the elderly as well. This last issue was great! The “Encounters with Jesus” series is very well done and you can take them to your heart, especially “Mary’s Memoir.” [Mar./Apr. 2001] Onycha Holt is to be commended. I also appreciated “The Paralysis of Perfectionism” by Laine in the same issue. I could follow that article with a nod of my head and an “Amen” throughout. Mrs. McDaniel’s studies on the sanctuary certainly give us all something to ponder and take to heart. One big “thank you,” and keep up the good work. TN

In response to the article, “The Paralysis of Perfectionism,” one area of perfectionism that was not mentioned by this author, and that has plagued me all of my life, is dieting. When I was 18 years old, my mother patted my bottom and told me I was going to look just like her someday. Oh my! That was just not going to happen! She struck a nerve that made me very determined that I would never let myself be anything less than perfect. (She wasn’t even very big, just a bit out of proportion.)

All my life I obsessed about this and fussed and dieted so that this “curse” my mother put on me would never come true. Well, guess what? Today, 25 years later, horror of horrors, I look just like my mother! All that fretting over having

the perfect body only got me 25 years of diet fads, “chasing after the wind,” and aggravating myself and those around me, not to mention what it has probably done to my health. My priorities were definitely out of whack.

Too bad I couldn't have known Godly balance and Godly priorities. The end result probably would have been the same, but I would not have devoted and wasted so much energy on such vanity. And I would not have caused my family so much aggravation. My poor daughter now will probably grow up obsessed with her body because she learned very well how to do it from me. Vain perfectionism is a disease that only God can cure. Thank you for the insightful article. CO

Onycha Holt's "Encounters with Jesus" makes the women in the Bible come alive and seem very real. I was especially touched by "Mary's Memoir." I quote, "I write these words to earnestly plead with you—don't lose sight of Him." Amen! AR

I have been receiving *Hearth to Hearth* and I really enjoy it. I have moved and changed my last name... I would also like for you to send one to each of my daughters who are home schooling. LA

I wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoy all of *Hearth to Hearth*, but I especially enjoy the Father and Daughter answers to questions. Not many magazines or newsletters have anything like that in them. The stories about people's lives are of great interest. Someday I will write you about some of my experiences, and how God has moved in my life. Keep up the excellent work on the newsletter. By the way, I love the new layout. It looks very professional. I am looking forward to the next *Hearth to Hearth* issue. IL

PRAYER CALL:

A young man in our church (aged 19) has some very serious health problems. Please remember him and his family in your prayers.

EDITORS' NOTES:

» **Moving?** Remember to notify us of your change of address as quickly as possible if you don't want to miss any issues!

» **Reminder:** The return address shown on the back page is strictly for postal purposes only and should not be used for correspondence. The correct address for correspondence is *Hearth to Hearth*, P.O. Box 247, Pineville, WV 24874. (Please see the box at right.)

» **Something new:** It has been suggested that a bit of humor would be a nice addition, and we agree. So, turn to page 16 in this issue and smile with us at "Wee Wit & Wisdom."

Please send us your items for this section—things that your children, grandchildren or other children you know have said that are funny or wise beyond their years. We will print as many as possible. Other types of tasteful humor may be included from time to time, so if you come across something that you feel would be appropriate, please send it in for consideration. Thanks!

» **Conclusion:** The last installment of our series on "Understanding God's Plan of Redemption" begins on Page 12. If you have missed (or mislaid) any of them and would like to have the complete series for further study, we will be glad to send the missing issues to you. Just write and request them.

» **Check out** "A Page from My Experience" on page 10 in this issue! Then please put on your thinking cap and write up an experience of your own that you would like to share with the rest of us. You don't know how to write? Just tell it, on paper, in your own words, and we will help you with any editing that is needed.

» **Communication:** the key to all successful relationships! We want *Hearth to Hearth* to be a welcome "caller" at your house, but we need you to return the "visit." You can do so by giving us your feedback on the various articles in this (or any previous) issue. Let us know what you like (or don't like). Agree or disagree with any viewpoint expressed; share your views on any subject that is presented; suggest topics for future issues. A big thank you to those of you who have done just that! We so look forward to your letters.

» **Appreciation:** If you are a regular reader of *Hearth to Hearth*, you know that Grace Cox "officially" stepped aside as managing editor at the end of last year. Her "retirement" from *Hearth to Hearth* has not worked out exactly as

she planned, however; unofficially, she has been almost as involved as ever in the work of editing the paper though she has been relieved of most of her other duties. Please remember *Hearth to Hearth* in your prayers. It is God's work and He is working things out. His timing is always perfect. In the meantime, we are extremely thankful to Grace for not deserting us.

LETTER OF TESTIMONY:

We can all have light into what God wants for us; we only need to ask, and believe. I also have to ask for more faith and trust because I'm really weak and want to be made in the image of Jesus. I would love to have a mind like His so God will be glorified, which means that a lot of the folks around would see Him more clearly and maybe want to try it also—and be a lot happier as a result.

Have you noticed Jabez' prayer in 1 Chronicles 4:10? That Scripture was recently brought to my attention when I heard about a book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, by Bruce Wilkinson. In Verse 9, it says that "his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow." But God says that he is more honorable than his brethren, and we have to ask why. Then we read his prayer. I will quote it here, and in parenthesis is the way I personalize it. "Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed," (Put Thy blessings for me in my heart so that I will know that I am filled with Thy goodness and love and power) and enlarge my coast, (so that I may meet more souls that are in need of Thee, to impart to them what You have done for me in Your great love and concern) and that thine hand might be with me, (that I may better glorify You in all that I do and say) and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, (when Satan is coming at me, please provide a path for me to get out of his way without falling) that it may not grieve me! (it grieves me so much when I fall because I know that it causes You to grieve as though Your heart is broken. I don't want to break Your wonderful loving heart; it causes me to suffer greatly, knowing that I have done this to You; and I may give others pain for they won't see Your image in me. Please don't let me live up to the meaning of my name.)

That's what the prayer of Jabez means to me; what do you think?

It's good to know that God wants us to ask blessings for ourselves, and that He doesn't think that we're being selfish. It says at the end of verse 10, "And God granted him that which he requested."

All to His glory!

Lorene Mancusco

[Lorene writes from Fort Wainwright, Alaska]

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too many surprises left. A few more years of marriage and this comfort turned into dull routine. Romance was on life support. We needed to get back to the chase.

Romance by the Book

Jacob first met Rachel, his wife-to-be, at a well in Padan-aram. The Scriptures tell us she was lovely in form and beautiful. She must have made quite an impression on Jacob, who was so smitten he agreed to work seven years for Rachel's father, Laban, to earn her hand in marriage. Seven years is a long time for a relationship to last if it is only based on physical attraction. Jacob had plenty of time to reconsider the woman he had chosen to marry. Despite the lengthy courtship, he remained deeply in love with Rachel. Their obvious

No purchased romantic trinket can replace the value of verbally building up our lover.

affection for each other continued long after they said their marriage vows. (Genesis 29:9-20)

What intrigued Jacob so about Rachel? I like to imagine she was charming and witty, someone who knew how to tease. Just being near her brought Jacob pleasure. She was a master of the art of captivity. Rachel knew how to keep the chase alive.

Song of Songs overflows with descriptions of two lovers' physical attraction for each other. For the most part it focuses on the man's attraction to the woman. Her beauty is what initially draws the man to her. But one particular passage (Song of Songs 5: 9-10) turns the tables. Friends of the young maiden challenge her to explain what makes her beloved so exceptional. "My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven." The remaining text borders on ooey-goey in its praise. What can we learn from this? The importance of praising our partner! No purchased romantic trinket can replace the value of verbally building up our lover.

Proverbs 15:27 says, "A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day..." The writer knew what it was like to be constantly battered by criticism. He sounds as if he can't stand his own wife. Constant

criticism can drive a wedge in a relationship and choke romance to death.

Everyday Love

Being a glass-half-empty kind of person, I have to work hard at building my husband up. Sometimes my efforts are laughable. But since becoming aware of my need to do this, it has become easier. Sometimes it's something as simple as saying, "Thanks for getting gas in the car for me. I really appreciate it." Not exactly Hollywood screen-play material, but it makes my husband feel valued.

Mutual respect is part of a marriage's firm foundation.

Mutual respect is part of a marriage's firm foundation. For years, my friend Lin's negative, critical spirit nearly always focused negatively on her husband and family. One day, during a soul-searching quiet time, Lin's destructive behavior was revealed to her. Now she operates under the WYSTTYB principle (Would You Say That to Your Boss?). She's made it a habit to never say anything to her husband that she wouldn't say to her boss, neighbor or pastor. Her radically different attitude changed her marriage relationship.

Efforts toward self-improvement, like Lin's, are one way to show your partner you really care. There

My husband came from a huggy family. I come from a long line of ice cubes.

are other simple actions we can take to keep the sparks flying. Something as simple as changing a hairstyle or donning a new outfit can be a real self-esteem booster, and such small gestures convey a sense of visual teasing in which a spouse delights. But verbal teasing, like a corny joke that both partners appreciate

or poking fun at each other's silly habits, can be just as appealing. When done with a sense of balance, it keeps the electricity flowing.

You can fan the flames through touching. My husband came from a huggy family. I come from a long line of ice cubes. Jeff taught me the value of human

contact. It isn't unusual for him to come up behind me and give me a tight squeeze, whispering sweet nothings in my ear. I am still working on improving my warm fuzzy responses. It remains a work area for me. We give each other back rubs and foot rubs. We take showers together. Sometimes we hold hands when we take walks.

Share Each Other's Worlds

If your mate loves sports and you're the creative type, interest in sports probably doesn't come naturally. Recently I watched the Master's golf tournament with my husband. It would not have been my first choice for an afternoon activity, but it made his day. I learned more about the game and my gesture showed my interest in him.

Romantic people share their accomplishments and struggles—dinner out to celebrate a triumph at work, a scribbled note of encouragement on the home message board, a shared prayer to uplift a sagging spirit.

Romantic people don't take each other for granted. Don't get into the habit of just calling your husband to remind him to bring home a gallon of milk. Surprise him. Call to tell him you love him. It's easy to do as newlyweds, but the challenge comes when the "honeymoon" period of your marriage is over.

Romantic people share hobbies and similar interests. Kathy and Jeff Cooper's children are now grown and on their own. One would think that the amount of pizzazz in the Cooper's marriage would be closely related to the number of years they have been married, and yet they seem like newlyweds. They remain each other's best friends. Every morning Kathy and Jeff rise before work and set out together on their morning jog. They are also avid campers and still like to go camping

with friends. They have discovered a key secret to a romantic marriage. Each cord of interest they have together is woven into a stronger, unifying cord, which binds their relationship together.

Romantic people dream together. Jeff and I have longed to own a Victorian home but our finances have never permitted it. So instead of the real thing, we settled for an enormous Victorian dollhouse, one that Jeff painstakingly assembled. It remains a symbol of our romantic dream.

One older friend of mine explained the way she and her husband still share their dreams. "Roger has a special thing that he's done since before we were married. He tells me his dreams about us growing old together and sitting on a porch in rocking chairs with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren running around." What a romantic and comforting picture.

Till death do us part is a very long time. It means you and your partner will

grow old together, but it doesn't mean your marriage relationship has to grow old with you. Small acts of kindness and compassionate gestures all work together to keep the sparks flying. Make it a game to see how many different ways you can show your mate you love him. Remember, the chase isn't over. It's just beginning.



[Teena Stewart is a writer/artist residing in Aurora, Colorado. She is also the Gifts Discovery and Volunteer Empowerment Director at Creekside Church. Visit her web site at: <http://www.smartwrks.com/TeenaStewartWriter.html> to learn more. Reprinting this article without author permission is strictly prohibited.]

Care to comment? Perhaps you would like to share your own suggestions on "how to keep the chase alive"! See box on page 3 for our address.



Blue Feathers

Away across the river
A log cabin grew;
There you plucked on a dulcimer
With a feather of blue.
There I sang the old songs
To you all alone—
To you and your dulcimer
And your feather, my own.
There we raised our children,
Two times two,
Who pluck on dulcimers
With feathers of blue.
Now the children and dulcimers
And my love and I
Go searching for feathers
In the blue of the sky.

Eliza Louisa Dawson

Teaching Good Manners to Children

John Rosemond

In *Toward a Meaningful Life: The wisdom of the Rebbe* (Morrow, 1995, adapted by Simon Jacobson), the late Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, former leader of the Lubavitcher movement of Chassidic Judaism, states unequivocally that a child's character education should take priority over his academic education. In fact, the esteemed Rebbe (pronounced reb'-be) says all other educational efforts are basically meaningless unless built on the solid foundation of good character.

Good manners are a way of showing respect for others and not a means of calling attention to oneself. The most important of all manners is that of doing all you can to help the people around you feel comfortable.

Character and manners are inseparable. Good manners are symptomatic of good character, and the linchpin of good character is respect for others, as reflected by good manners.

Today's parents would certainly say they want their children to possess good character, but how many take the time to teach good manners? Modeling the proper behavior is not enough. Teaching manners requires instruction, and instruction—whether reminding, explaining, correcting, or rehearsing—takes time. The world would definitely be a better place if parents would take even half the time they spend driving their children to various extracurricular pursuits and use it to teach manners instead.

Teaching manners to preschool children—the earlier the better—pays off in numerous ways. I have nothing but personal experience to support what I'm about to say, but I'll bet my stock portfolio that the well-mannered child is going to be more obedient, do better in school, and get along far better with siblings and friends. Not to mention that the child's parents will receive lots of positive feedback from other parents, teachers, neighbors, and so on. Not to mention that for all those reasons, the child in question will be much happier than he or she otherwise would have been.

The first manners a child should learn, by his or her fourth birthday, are (in no particular order):

- » saying “please,” “thank you,” and “you're welcome” when appropriate.
- » saying “I'm sorry” when he's hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- » saying “excuse me” when appropriate (but see below for when it's NOT appropriate).
- » sharing toys and other possessions freely.
- » saying “Yes ma'am/sir” and “No ma'am/sir” when appropriate (I'm betraying my Southern roots here).
- » not interrupting adult conversations, even with “excuse me.”

Teaching Children Not to Interrupt

I assign a lot of weight to this particular manner for several reasons. First, in learning not to interrupt, a child learns patience. Second, learning not to interrupt strengthens respect for adults. Third, I am highly annoyed when a child interrupts an adult conversation.

With regards to the latter, it would seem that today's parents teach their children it's perfectly all right to interrupt two adults in conversation, and for any reason at all, by simply walking up and saying, “Excuse me!” I gather this because when a child simply walks up and begins talking, it's usually the case that the child's parent will stop talking to me, look down at the child, and say, “What do we say?” At which point the child says, “Excuse me.” At which point I must exert great effort to keep from grabbing the parent by the throat and shaking violently while screaming, “Oh,



please! Pardon me! Excuse me! Forgive me!”

I said as much at a recent talk in Rancho Santa Fe, California. Afterwards, a well-spoken gentleman from South Africa introduced himself and remarked that he, too, was annoyed and/or cynically amused by parents who tolerated their children’s interruptions. He told me that in South Africa, one of the first things a child is taught is how to be recognized when he wants to say something. To wit: the child walks into the general area where the adults are talking and stands a respectful distance—say, eight feet-away. Any fool, he said, can tell the child wants to speak. When the adults reach a point where a pause in their conversation feels natural, one (the child’s parent, usually) will turn to the child and say, “Yes?,” at which point the child will speak.

Oh, how civilized!!! But wait!!! That is exactly what I was taught as a child! And, I dare say, so were most of my peers. How is it that children who were taught this important social formality—one that speaks so loudly to the quality of their overall upbringing—fail to teach it to their own kids? To answer my own question, I think there are several reasons, but they all boil down to one: laziness.

Today’s parents are, by and large, a lazy lot. They think parenting is taking a child to a soccer game and watching from the stands. That’s not parenting. Parenting is not a spectator sport. It’s hands on! It’s a verb!!! (Note: An illicit verb, but a “verb” nonetheless, if one accepts the validity of the vernacular.)

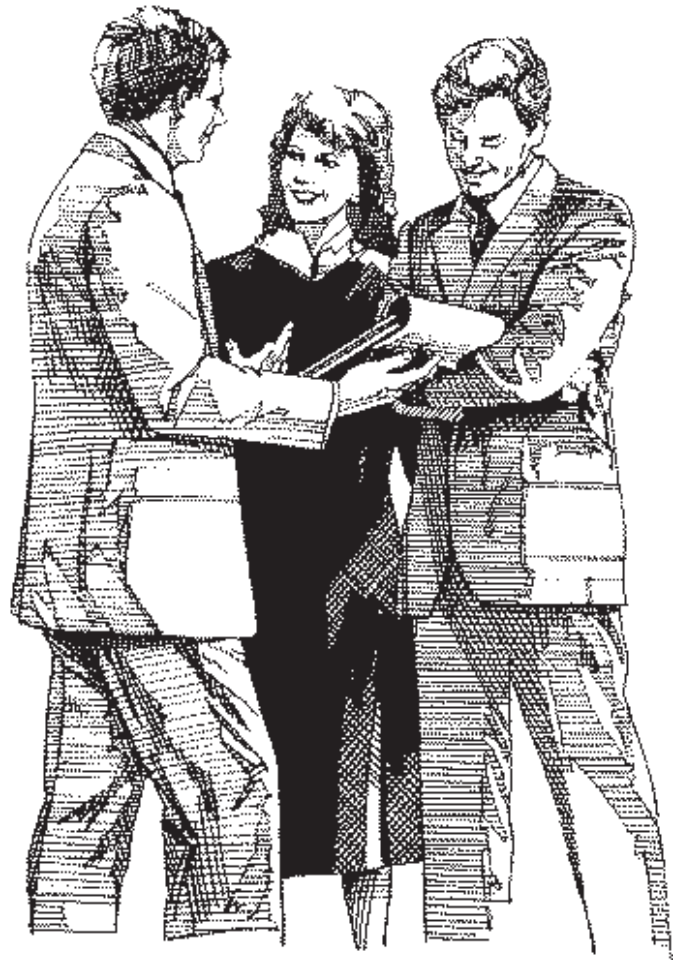
Today’s parents are likely to expend a lot of energy doing things that have little if any long-term value to a child, and little energy doing things that are of lasting value (and would, in fact, make their job a whole lot easier in the long run). Like taking the time to teach a child—by explaining and rehearsing, for example—how to be recognized when two adults are engaged in conversation.

In that regard, I would suggest that the fellow from South Africa had the right idea. Teach your child to stand a respectful distance from adults who are talking and wait, silently and in a state of stillness, until he is acknowledged. And, when it comes right down to it, gradually increase his wait until he’s learned to be silent and still for upwards of 5 minutes.

“So, what’s the child to do if there’s a genuine emergency?”

How about giving your child a hand signal to use in such circumstances? And, let’s face it, what a child considers an emergency is not always an emergency or even close to it.

“And what should I do when my child interrupts, even after I’ve taught him the art of waiting?”



I really don’t think there’s a formula for that one, other than to say make sure he learns that misbehavior has consequences. Put him to bed early that evening. Cancel a sleepover that’s to take place later in the week. Whatever you do, do something he’ll remember!

And don’t forget, when he does the right thing, to tell him how proud you are. Punishment is a necessary aspect of discipline, but without equal amounts of praise, it does nothing but breed contempt.



[Reprinted from Mr. Rosemond’s weekly column, June 2000, available on the Internet. Used with permission. For more information on John Rosemond, please visit his Web site at www.rosemond.com.]

Mary Magdalene

Onycha Holt

One thing that can be said about Mary is that whenever she did anything, it was with her whole heart. Over the years it didn't matter what people said or how they looked at her; she followed her heart. Her foolishness only became apparent to her when she had the vantage point of hindsight. This all changed when she met Jesus. Here her heart came to a screeching halt. No longer did it roam, for she had found a home—an abiding place where she was cherished, understood, counseled, and never once condemned. She had never known such love, and she would never, ever leave Him. No earthly force could stop her now, anymore than an earthly hand could rise up and draw a shade down on the heavenly expanse. This is why she was on her way to His tomb that Sunday morning. The Sabbath had interrupted the burial process, and she refused to leave anything half-done with Jesus.

She had had plenty of time to think during the Sabbath hours. The cruelty of the people was overwhelming to her. How could they have treated Jesus so horribly? He had only shown kindness to those around Him. To all those, that is, except many of the Pharisees and synagogue leaders, and she thought she understood the reason for the difference. Hadn't she been cast at their feet, also condemned by them? She knew how that felt. Only she had had a Savior to rescue her from their vicious assault. Slowly she had heard them retreat, leaving her at the feet of Jesus, and at His

feet was where she had stayed from then on. His every word had been life to her. He had been her cheer, her hope, her guide. In Him she had grown and had been transformed into a new creature. A new leaf was

turned over every day with Him. How could she live without Him now?

Something else was pressing on her mind. Jesus was dead. She had seen them take Him from the cross and place Him in the tomb. What actually happened when you died? Jesus had said her brother Lazarus had been asleep when he was in the tomb. Yet, He had also told the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. They both had died, but they surely weren't asleep in that parable. It WAS a parable, wasn't it? What did it all mean? Oh, how she wished Jesus were still alive to help her sort it all out.

These thoughts, however, were pushed aside as a heavier weight settled in. Without Jesus she had no hope. How could she ever be as good as He was? When He was alive, she had purposed in her heart to follow Him. Whenever He had been in town, she had been at His feet listening to His every word, watching His every move as He ministered to the needs of others.

Being like Him was her only desire, so that even when He was on the road and gone, she tried in her own fumbling way to show His love to those around her. The problem was, the more she was near Him, the more she realized how unrighteous and unholy she truly was. It seemed she was always sorry for shortcomings, for unmasked-for pride, for deep-seated judgmental thoughts about others. Even though she knew she was slowly changing, she also knew it just wasn't enough. Her

**White the willow
And white the thorn,
Where Mary walks
This milk-white morn.**

**Leaves and petals
Are still, so still,
and dew lies cold,
So cold, so chill.**

**Sadly, slowly,
She walks alone,
Thinking of One
Behind a stone.**

**Walking, wishing,
Eyes on the sod,
Hoping to hear
The Son of God.**

**Would He could come,
As once He came,
The Risen One
Calling her name . . .**

**“Mary! Mary!”
Fast, oh faster . . .
Ah! Speak Mary . . .
“Master! Master!”**

John G. Patrick

[Adapted.]

change only allowed her to see more of His goodness, which in turn revealed more of her unsightliness. It seemed a vicious circle.

Tears blinded her eyes as she neared the tomb. She had disappointed Him so many times, and yet He had kept on loving her. She knew her own heart and how

**Tears blinded her eyes
as she neared the tomb.
She had disappointed
Him so many times,
and yet He had kept on
loving her.**

easily it was swayed by pride and selfishness, but He had always kept her going in the right direction. How she loved and missed Him. She felt as if she were falling in a pit with no bottom and with no way to slow her descent.

When she arrived, she was surprised to find the tomb open, but even more surprised to look inside and see that it was empty. She seemed unmindful of the heavenly angels seated inside, but did notice, through her tears, a stranger standing outside, and she asked Him if He knew where the body had been taken.

“Mary,” was all she heard, but the voice was unmistakable. Without thinking, she moved toward Him, joy filling her soul. But before she could reach Him, He said, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” And then He sent her to tell the others.

With tears of joy, she ran, leaving her spices behind. It was so like Him to send her on a mission of compassion. As she left, she

turned to look once more, but He was gone, escorted in triumph to His heavenly throne.

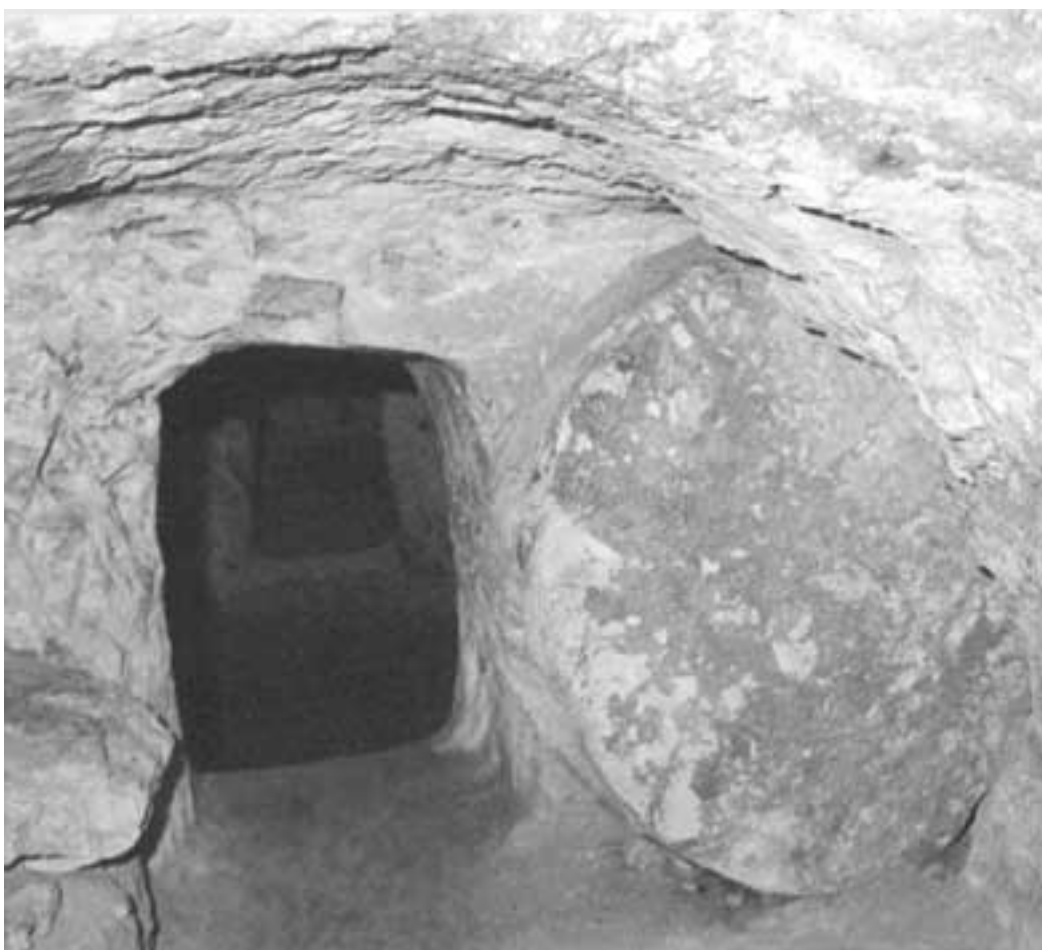
The angels proclaimed His birth as a babe, but Mary, this Mary of all people, proclaimed the wonderful, amazing, life-saving news of His resurrection. The angels AND Jesus had waited for her to come, and only then had left on their heavenly mission. How unspeakably kind they were to allow her this privilege.

Mary always remembered this special gift of heaven. She continued to follow Jesus in her own faltering way, for she knew Jesus was alive even though she couldn't see Him. She also knew death was just as He had said—a sleep—and that was just what He had been doing while in the tomb, sleeping, awaiting that call which resounded through the universe for Him to return to His Father and ours.

Praise God for such wonderful love!



[Onycha writes from Camden-on-Gauley, WV]



Bringing the Children to Jesus

Patricia Osborne

Early one morning as I sat at the table sipping a cup of hot green tea and reading the first nine pages of *Hearth to Hearth* non-stop, my thoughts wandered to some of the “heart warming

One of the most memorable blessings was a cute little boy with big brown eyes, all of five years old, who came to us very broken hearted and confused.

and heart wrenching stories” I might write. [See HTH Survey Report, Jan./Feb. 2001. Editor] After having cared for one hundred foster children over a period of years, I have at least one hundred stories tucked in my heart!

The spark of inspiration had been ignited. Photo albums, stacked and neatly stored away, were brought to mind. I decided to finally take them out and refresh some memories of our experiences—some happy, some sad, sometimes both mingled together. There were blessings, nevertheless, in each one of them. As I looked at the photos, my thoughts would alternate: back to the beginning, twenty-two years ago, then fast-forward to the present, then back again.

One of the most memorable blessings was a cute little boy with big brown eyes, all of five years old, who came to us very broken hearted and confused. His aunt had cared for

him since he was a small baby, but when she could no longer provide for him in addition to her own son, she left him, with a note, at the office of Human Services.

All along he had believed that his aunt was his mother and his cousin his brother. I reflected on the many nights when he cried uncontrollably, on praying with him, rocking him and singing him to sleep.

Gradually he adjusted to his new way of life, and the years passed quickly. At age twelve he had the opportunity to meet and visit his natural mother and siblings. Reluctantly, and a bit fearfully, off he went.

During the seven years he had been with us, he was brought up in the admonition of the Lord. He was active in Pathfinders (a Christian group somewhat similar to Boy Scouts) and loved the weekends that he often spent with his fellow “Polar Bear” club members from the parochial school he attended.

According to the decision of the court he was now old enough, at age twelve, to decide for himself whether to live with his mother or with us. What a very hard choice for one so young! To help in the decision-making, he spent time with her on occasion. Each time he returned from a visit he would share with me certain behaviors and problems in the other home that he had not approved of, and thus it was apparent that everything he had learned in our home was embedded in his conscience. What a blessing that was! It seemed clear that he was going to choose to remain with us. Praise God!

At thirteen he became a permanent part of our lives through adoption. Now twenty-eight and an

ex-Marine, he lives in Virginia and commutes to his security management job in Washington, D.C. Every day we pray that, by the grace of God, he will continue to make the right choices in his life.

Throughout the years, some of our foster children seemed to just fade out of our lives, caught up, I suppose, in their own ways of life. Others did a complete disappearing act. Some have stayed in contact, and a few have bonded with us, remaining close and very much a part of us. How rewarding that some have their own businesses, others are still in college, and still others are married with families of their own. A few, sad to say, are incarcerated. But more important than anything, the seeds of Jesus’ love were planted in their hearts. I’m sure the Holy Spirit helps them recall memories of experiences and lessons they learned while with

According to the decision of the court he was now old enough, at age twelve, to decide for himself whether to live with his mother or with us.

us, whether their stay was long or short. We always pray for each one, and we remain thankful that they were part of our lives.

(Continued bottom of next page)



Teens & Parents Ask Father & Daughter Answer



Dear Father and Daughter,

I have a unique question. I have lost a friend and family member from AIDS. I don't think I could take losing another loved one to this deadly virus. So you can understand that I want to be very cautious about the HIV virus. Here is my question: I have a teenaged son and he dates on a regular basis. Would it be wrong to give him condoms in the event that he falls to temptation?

Cautious Parent

Dear Cautious Parent,

First, please accept my condolences on the loss of your loved one. Death is a difficult event to understand at any time. Most people know that the HIV virus can be passed in a variety of ways. I am going to assume by your question that the virus your friend and family member contracted was through sexual contact.

I think that every loving parent is concerned about the physical well being of his or her children. The HIV virus does not care who it infects. However, I need to tell you that the condom is not the answer. The condom is not 100% effective. Actually, there is only one method that is 100% foolproof and that is abstinence while waiting for marriage. Once married, your spouse is to be your only sexual partner.

I can just hear your laughter and your comment, "Come on, no teen waits until marriage; the urge is too strong." But who is laughing when they become infected with HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases, not to mention unplanned pregnancies. In addition to the physical damage that can take place when one does not abstain, there is also the emotional damage (especially to the girl), which people don't talk about very often.

I would recommend that you use the tragic loss of your friend and family member to teach your son about the importance and need of abstinence, not the use of a condom. I think we need to express our confidence in our children that they will do what is right and good. If we "hint" to our children that we expect them to fail and give in to these "urges," guess what—most of them will. God gave the power of choice and the exercise of free will to the human race. That is one of the things that sets us apart from the animal kingdom. Teaching your son to wait until marriage will make some young lady, and her parents, very happy.

Father

Dear CP,

Wow, I'm sorry about your friend. That's a tough situation, but the answer to your question is easy. If you condone sexual activity by giving him condoms, then your son will have little reason to abstain from sex. Sounds kind of counterproductive to me. Don't give your child condoms.

Giving him condoms would be like telling him, "Here, son, I don't believe that you are an honorable young man who will save sex for marriage. And on top of that, I don't believe that you are responsible enough to obtain and wear your own protection, so I've gone ahead and taken your sex life into my own hands. Here, go sleep around 'safely.'" You would be basically showing your kid that you think and expect the worst of him, and giving him condoms would only help him to live UP to your low expectations.

The problem with unwanted pregnancies, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases isn't that people have sex without a condom; the problem is that people choose to have sex without first having a marriage commitment, complete with ceremony. The point isn't to obtain sexual protection but to abstain from sexual action. Maybe you should let your kid know that you trust him to become a responsible adult. If you instill in him ethical principles of sexual conduct, he won't need the latex. Principles = Protection.

Daughter

[This father and daughter team, who prefer to remain anonymous, write from Texas. They have a newspaper column in which they address questions posed by parents and teens. Do you have a question about parent/teen relationships? Please send it to *Hearth to Hearth*. Questions from teens as well as parents are welcome! You will not need to identify yourself.]

(Continued from previous page)

Our home is no longer open to foster children but, along with our needed retirement, we were blessed with a very sweet teenaged foster daughter who has been with us for four years. She is an exceptional child in that she has a holy boldness in witnessing to others no matter what their age. This is something we have never seen in any of our other children. She is such a blessing to us, and it has been a real pleasure to have her with us in our later years.

There are many, many experiences I would love to share. Perhaps I will, another time soon. In the meantime, I shall be enjoying the wonderfully inspiring stories of others that I am looking forward to reading in *Hearth to Hearth*..

Understanding God's Plan of Redemption

A Sin-Free Universe

A cleansing now in progress

The apostle Paul tells us in Hebrews 9:23 that "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." In other words, all these rituals we have been studying about are only symbols. The "better sacrifices" needed to cleanse the "heavenly things" are what the symbols point to—the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. This cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, as referred to by the prophet Daniel in Daniel 8:14, is now in progress. (For more information, please request our studies on prophecy.)

God is now in the process of asking each of us the same four basic questions He put to Adam and Eve in the garden: "Where art thou?" "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" and "What is this that thou hast done?" The answers that we give to these questions will determine whether we will be sealed or cut off at the end of this, the antitypical Day of Atonement, in which we live.

The scapegoat

After the sanctuary and the people have been thus cleansed, it is now time to dispose of this record of sin that has been symbolically removed from the sanctuary. Aaron, as the high priest, represents Christ, the true High Priest, who purchased our sins with His own blood. [It has been said that the word "forgiveness" means "give-for." Christ gave His life in exchange for our sins. He took upon Himself our sins that we might have His righteousness.] Since He has paid the ransom price, our sins now belong to Him. The next step in the services on the Day of Atonement plainly reveals the ultimate destination

of the sins that have been committed by God's people. Approaching the scapegoat, Aaron lays his hands on its head and thereby symbolically transfers all the confessed and forgiven sins of God's people onto him. Then the scapegoat is led off into the wilderness by the hand of a "fit man."

Now, it is quite apparent who the Lord's goat represented—the Lord, of course. But whom does the scapegoat represent? Read carefully the account in Leviticus 16:21-26. What clues are given there that might help us to decide?

Notice first that while the Lord's goat was slain, the scapegoat was to be left alive. Yet, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. (Hebrews 9:22) Also, the man who led the



sin-laden goat into the wilderness was considered defiled by that act. Sin offerings cleansed; they did not defile. The scapegoat had no part in making any atonement for Israel. It is not until after the record of Israel's sins had already been removed from the sanctuary and the people that it enters the picture. I conclude, therefore, that the scapegoat represents Satan; the one who has caused God's people to sin against Him.

Even as the serpent in Eden was sentenced because of his role in causing Eve to sin, so Satan will have to answer for his guilt in deceiving the people of God and causing them to sin against Him. Those who are "cut off" will bear the punishment for their own sins, but Satan will be punished for the

confessed and forgiven sins of the people of God. Revelation 20:1-3 speaks of Satan being bound for a thousand years—a fitting fulfillment of the scapegoat being led into the wilderness; a "land not inhabited." (Leviticus 16:22) "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Two judgment scenes

The Scriptures speak of two judgment scenes. The first judgment scene is the one that is depicted in the sanctuary typology. It is a judgment of all who have ever named the name of Christ; those who have claimed to be His people. Of necessity, it must take place before Christ comes back to claim His own. Otherwise how would He determine who is eligible to return to heaven with Him? who would not be a threat to a sin-free universe?

The second judgment scene is portrayed most graphically in the book of Revelation. You can read the record in chapter 20. Then chapter 21 tells about the new heaven and the new earth that God will create. What a wonderful day that will be!

In conclusion

At the conclusion of the Day of Atonement, the people of Israel were "sealed." At the conclusion of the antitypical Day of Atonement (the "Day" that the type represented), the destiny of everyone in this world will also be sealed. Just as, in the type, some were "cleansed" and others were "cut off," at the end of this "Day" some will have the "seal of God" while others

will have the “mark of the beast.” (See Revelation chapters 7 and 13)

On a Jubilee year, the very last thing that took place on the Day of Atonement was the blowing of the ram’s horn trumpet to usher in the Jubilee. At that time all land holdings reverted back to their original owner. Just as Israel’s spring festivals typified the death and resurrection of Christ and the beginning of the spread of the gospel message, so the fall festivals represent the conclusion of the work and the gathering in of the harvest. At the conclusion of the true Day of Atonement, after the cleansing of the “sanctuary,” (remember that we are to be the temple of the living God, 1 Corinthians 3:17;

6:19), which constitutes the sealing of the people, I want my ears to be tuned to the blowing of that trumpet which will announce the joyful news that the time of Satan’s probationary rule is over; the land has returned to its original Owner! It is a trumpet call that will awake the dead!

I am looking forward to the Feast of Tabernacles in heaven where God’s people will tabernacle for a thousand years, rejoicing in their deliverance and entering into “God’s rest” while the land (this earth) is enjoying its sabbath. (See Leviticus 26:32-35; 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21) Leviticus 23:34-44 tells about this feast. Note that the people were to take palm branches to wave in

rejoicing before the Lord. Compare this scene with the ones recorded in John 12:13 and Revelation 7:9.

This concludes the series on Understanding God’s Plan of Redemption. We have covered a lot of ground in a very short space, but I hope it will whet your appetite for further study into God’s Word. Please do not take my word for anything. Be a “noble Berean”(Acts 17:10, 11) and check everything out for yourself, studying “to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Esther McDaniel

Why Do We Use the Terms “Holy Place” and “Most Holy Place”?

David Clayton

Why do we speak of the “holy place” and the “most holy place” with reference to the sanctuary when these terms are not always used in the same way in the Scriptures? This is a question that is sometimes asked, and inherent in the question is the suggestion that it is wrong to use terms that are not precisely the ones always used in the Scriptures.

In the Old Testament the first apartment is sometimes referred to as the “tabernacle of the congregation” (Exodus 27:21) while the second apartment is often referred to as simply, “the holy place” (Leviticus 16:2, 3). But it is important to note that in the New Testament the same terms are not used to describe the same places (e.g., in the book of Hebrews). Therefore, an interesting question is, which terms should we use: the Old Testament terms or the New Testament terms? The answer is that the terms “holy place” and “most holy place” are convenient designations which help us to easily recognize what we are talking about, using terms which will be readily understood and which are recognized by most Bible students.

What is important is not so much that we should always use the same terms, as that we should always be able to know exactly what we are talking about. For example, we use the word “Shekinah” to designate the supernatural light that appeared between the cherubim, but the word is not found in the Bible. Other examples include the words “incarnation” and “millennium.” Everyone understands what these words signify, so there is no problem with using them.

Some probably feel that the terms “holy place” and “most holy place” strongly suggest that one part of the sanctuary (and, therefore, since the sanctuary represents heavenly realities, one part of heaven) is holier than the other. However, we need to notice that even the apostle Paul, in Hebrews 9:2, 3, does the same thing when he calls the first apartment (in the Greek) “hagia” (holy) and the second apartment “hagia hagion” (holy of holies).

In the earthly sanctuary the second apartment was the place where the presence of God was most fully manifested. All of the priests could go into the first apartment but not into the second. Why were they allowed to enter the first apartment but not the second, if both apartments were of equal holiness? Was this not intended to teach a lesson? Was it not to impress upon their minds the fact that sin could not enter the presence of God? Only one person (the high priest) was permitted to enter the second apartment and he only once each year. The meticulous care with which he had to prepare himself to enter was guaranteed to impress upon his mind, and the minds of the people, the concept that he was coming more fully into God’s presence on this occasion than at any other time or in any other place. It should not be difficult to understand why a greater degree of holiness was associated with the second apartment and why the designation “most holy place” was applied to it. It was there that the Shekinah, the glory of God’s presence, was manifested.

This is not to suggest that in heaven there are places that are more holy than others. This application would not fit in a place where sin does not exist. However, it does give us convenient terms to apply to the different apartments in heaven where the various activities related to the salvation of mankind are carried out. It is probable that in heaven the emphasis is more on the functional aspects of the apartments, rather than on one apartment being more holy than the other. Let us not forget, however, that the Bible always represents the place where God manifests His presence as a place to be approached with great care and reverence, whether this place is on earth or in heaven.

[David Clayton writes from Jamaica West Indies]



For a Grown Son

Your room is prim and tidy now, but, son,
Its neatness does not bring a joy to me.
I can remember when I used to scold
Because your things were not where they should be.
Your bed is made—no wrinkle mars its tautness,
There is no disarray nor any crease—
But could I once again see your disorder
As once I saw, my heart would know great peace.
But you are grown, and there is no recalling.
You have a son now who is all your own.
So love him, guide him, teach him, understand him;
A little son so quickly will be grown.

Author Unknown



A Prayer for Mother

As sure as God in His heaven
Looks down from His home above,
I know He will guard and keep you
And care for your needs with His love.

He'll keep His watch o'er you, Mother,
As a shepherd does his sheep
And be by your side every hour
And protect you during your sleep.

If your day should be long and weary
And your burdens too heavy to bear,
Remember that God is beside you
And keeping you safe in His care.

As sure as a new day is dawning
He'll give strength to carry us through
And shelter us in His great mercy
And our hope He will often renew.

He'll shower us all with His blessings,
And strength and hope from above
Will make the dark day full of sunbeams
By just showing us of His love.

So always remember, dear Mother,
As sure as the night follows day
God will always protect you and bless you
And by your side He will stay.

Helen Oshel

The Lost Sheep

'Twas a sheep, not a lamb, that had strayed away
In the parable Jesus told;
A grown up sheep that had gone astray
From the ninety and nine in the fold.

Out on the hillside, out in the cold,
'Twas a sheep the Good Shepherd sought;
And back to the flock, safe in the fold,
'Twas a sheep the Good Shepherd brought.

And why for the sheep should we earnestly long,
And as earnestly hope and pray?
Because there is danger, if they go wrong,
They will lead the lambs astray.

For the lambs will follow the sheep, you know,
Wherever the sheep may stray
When the sheep go wrong, it will not be long
Till the lambs are as wrong as they.

And so with the sheep we earnestly plead,
For the sake of the little lambs.
If the lambs are lost, what terrible cost
Some sheep will have to pay.

Author unknown



Mother's Glasses

I've told about the times that Ma can't find her pocketbook,
And how we have to hustle round for it to help her look,
But there's another care we know that often comes our way,
I guess it happens easily a dozen times a day.
It starts when first the postman through the door a letter passes,
And Ma says, "Goodness gracious me! Wherever are my glasses?"

We hunt 'em on the mantelpiece an' by the kitchen sink,
Until Ma says: "Now, children, stop, an' give me time to think
Just when it was I used 'em last an' just exactly where.
Yes, now I know—the dining room. I'm sure you'll find 'em there."
We even look behind the clock, we busy boys an' lasses,
Until somebody runs across Ma's missing pair of glasses.

We've found 'em in the Bible, an' we've found 'em in the lour,
We've found 'em in the sugar bowl, an' once we looked an hour
Before we came across 'em in the padding of her chair;
An' many a time we've found 'em in the topknot of her hair.
It's a search that ruins order an' the home completely wrecks,
For there's no place where you may not find poor Ma's elusive specs.

But we're mighty glad, I tell you, that the duty's ours to do,
An' we hope to hunt those glasses till our time of life is through;
It's a little bit of service that is joyous in its thrill,
It's a task that calls us daily an' we hope it always will.
Rich or poor, the saddest mortals of all the joyless masses
Are the ones who have no mother dear to lose her reading glasses.

Edgar A. Guest

She Hath Made Herself Ready

Milli Lewis

“...as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. (Isaiah 62:5)

God has a special plan for every woman. He wants her to be fulfilled, complete in Him. He wants that special relationship where each woman will commune with Him and draw nigh unto Him. Mothers have a very special role to play in fulfilling this desire God has for their daughters. God has entrusted nothing to us of so great importance as the souls of our children. He has loaned these children to us so that we may introduce them to Him and bring them up with hearts full of love for the Father and the Bridegroom.

The most important job the mother of a daughter has is to bring her daughter to the feet of Jesus. She can teach her to meditate on God’s Word rather than just reading it. She can teach her to commune with God and listen to Him as she prays.

God wants every woman to be complete in Him in every aspect of her life.

Through her years of experience, the mother has learned many things about life that her daughter cannot yet know—knowledge and understanding about commitment, loyalty, respect, honor, and endurance. To be able to teach her daughter these things she must first have learned them for herself. She will learn them only as she sits at the feet of Jesus, reading His Word and communing with Him. As she contemplates His love and goodness, and as she asks Him to put His divine quality of love in her, her heart will swell with that love, and it will naturally overflow! Her daughter will see that she has been with Jesus, and she will reap the fruit that is borne in her mother’s life that is hidden in Him.

The knowledge and values that she imparts to her daughter (as well as the example she sets in her treatment of her husband and her own father) will have a direct influence on how her daughter relates to her husband and also to God. Continuously, as the daughter grows from childhood to adolescence to womanhood, the mother will be preparing her for life, including marriage, should that be her eventual choice.

There are many things to be done in preparation for a wedding. Mother and daughter work together closely as they plan the colors, try on bridal gowns, choose flowers and other decorations for the church, choose the cake, plan the food to be served at the reception and a thousand other details. Long hours and lots of hard work are invested for this special occasion. Neither the bride nor her mother seems to mind, though, because, when the special day arrives, it will all be worth it!

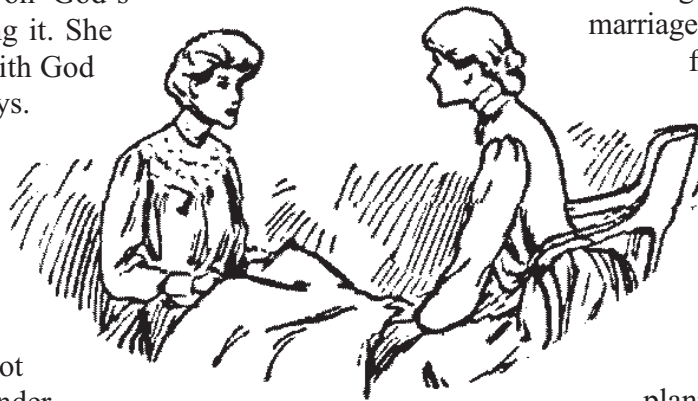
Before a wedding is planned, however, much preparation should be made for marriage. More thought and labor are often put into the wedding than in preparing for the marriage. How sad it is when there is a beautiful wedding but the bride has not been prepared for the responsibilities of marriage. Somehow, we think that the marriage will all take care of itself. Unfortunately, this is not true. It

would be interesting to see the results if as much time and effort were put into learning what it takes to have a happy marriage as are put into creating the perfect wedding.

Our heavenly Father is planning a wedding—the marriage of His Son to *His* bride, His church. It

will be not only a beautiful wedding but also a happy marriage, because only those who are adequately prepared for the eternal marriage will get to take part in the wedding. (Revelation 21:7,8) “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” (Revelation 19:7)

The bride is, even now, with the divine assistance of the Bridegroom, preparing herself for the marriage. We know that she will be a beautiful bride. She will be clothed in white raiment, which is the glory, the character of God (Revelation 19: 8; 21:11; Exodus 33:18,19) that the Bridegroom has provided for her. She will be adorned with the gold ornaments—the fruit of the spirit—of His character of love. (Galatians 5:22,23) Her eyes will be clear and bright because she has allowed Him to anoint them with His salve of spiritual discernment. (Revelation 3:18) She will wear a crown. (Revelation 2:10)



She will be given a white stone containing a name that only she will know. (Revelation 2:17) Just as many a husband calls his wife by a special name known only to her; evidently our heavenly Bridegroom will give us a special name, perhaps some term of endearment that is just between the two of us! Also, just as the bridegroom gives his name to his bride as her own, "...I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem...and I will write upon him my new name." (Revelation 3:12b) "...he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." (Zephaniah 3:17b) Imagine it! God will sing at the wedding! We wouldn't want to miss it, and we wouldn't want our daughters to miss it either!

As we teach our daughters, by precept and by example, the importance of communion with God, we are preparing them to be brides and for marriage, both in this world and when God calls for the marriage supper of the Lamb to begin. The love flowing from her heart to her husband, and from her heart to the heavenly Bridegroom will be evidence of the training we gave her. The training we give her will be evidence that He dwells in our hearts by love as well.

"I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Revelation 19:6, 7, 9)



[Milli writes from Batesville, Arkansas]

Wee Wit & Wisdom

Our little grandson had found the biggest tomato that he could find in our garden. It was huge! Holding it between his two small hands, he made his way to the back door of our neighbor's house, bearing his gift of love. The steps up to their door were a problem, though, and as he tried his best to navigate them his precious tomato fell from his hands and smashed.

Picking it up, he resolutely proceeded toward the open door. Our kind neighbor greeted him with, "What have you got there?" Looking at the badly damaged tomato in his hands he sputtered, "I brought you... I brought you... Tomato soup!" he finished triumphantly, presenting her with his gift.

Esther McDaniel

Hearth to Hearth

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