

# *Heart to Heart*

Devotional Thoughts for Women

December 2016

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## **Talk To Me!**

There is a running joke in my family about me. It seems I have an invisible sign on my forehead that flashes for attention when I am out and about. I didn't put it there, I don't want it there, but I can't seem to make it go away. The sign flashes "Talk to me!" and believe me...people see it and respond accordingly.

For instance, I can be at a thrift store, browsing the clothing or books, and someone will come up to me and strike up a conversation about something – anything, you name it. Like the time a young woman approached me, looked in my cart and asked what books I was purchasing. Or the time a lady walked up to me to ask how long I had owned the shoes I was wearing. Yes, it always happens, and I don't know why except for the fact I have the invisible flashing sign on me that they alone can see crystal clear. I once had a couple follow me around Target for awhile until they finally approached me to strike up a conversation about the Bible. We stood there and talked for almost half an hour. As I was telling that particular story to my family, my sister-in-law told me I needed to stop making eye contact and being so nice! I tried following her advice and even that didn't work. Here's what happened...I went with my husband on an appliance delivery around suppertime one evening. I waited in the car, happily reading my Kindle in peace and solitude when suddenly – someone knocked on my window. I rolled it down and there was the lady of the house who introduced herself to me and proceeded to talk my ear off ninety to nothing for the next 10 minutes until my husband returned and (blissfully) rescued me. He couldn't help but burst out laughing when he got into the van as he said, "You'll never believe what she said to me!" I certainly

was curious. He said that she saw me sitting in the van and asked him if I was his wife. When he told her “Yes”, she excitedly asked him, “Oooo! Can I go talk to her?” To which my darling husband said, “Sure! Go ahead!”

So you see, avoiding eye contact and even staying inside my vehicle *still* doesn't seem to hide my flashing “Talk to me” sign. It's inevitable that I will make friends wherever I go. But, hey, that's okay. I meet some interesting people and have some interesting conversations.

While all of this amuses my family, it also makes me stop to think about the people who are deliberately, sometimes desperately flashing a “Talk to me” sign and being met with total silence. Like the woman wandering around the grocery store trying to figure out how to buy the food her family needs when her husband just lost his job. How she needs some words of encouragement and maybe a couple of coupons that could help her. Or maybe it's the lonely widower sitting on the bench at the park watching children play, families having picnics, and others walking their dogs while he sits in silence and isolation. Perhaps it is a young millennial at a table in a coffee shop who has started to question the meaning of life and his purpose here on earth. If only someone could come talk to him and give him some hope as to what life is really all about. Or it could be the lady who has to come to the town well in the middle of the day when all of the other women are at home because she knows she will be shunned, shut out, and scorned if she dared to approach the group during the morning gathering. How desperately did she need and want someone to talk to her! Yet, someone did see her flashing sign and responded – not in harshness or scorn but in love and compassion. In John chapter 4, we read the account of how Jesus purposefully struck up a conversation with her which at first startled her but then turned into one of the most life-changing moments in her life. She slowly began to realize who it was she was talking to...and how much he loved and cared for her. When Jesus' disciples approached and saw him talking to her, they were

incredulous. John 4:27 says that, “*they marveled that He talked with a woman.*” Not only was it taboo at that time for a man to be talking alone with a woman but this was a Samaritan woman no less, a race of people the Jews avoided at all costs. None of that mattered to Jesus. He had put his finger on her heart and knew exactly what she needed. She needed him to talk to her. He told her words that changed her life and gave her the hope that she longed for. As a result of that conversation, she courageously went out and talked to everyone she could about the marvelous Messiah she had met, encouraging them to go and see him.

At this “most wonderful time of the year”, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle, but I challenge you to try to slow down and look around you carefully when you're out and about. Do you see any? If you look closely, you will notice them - those out there who are wearing the same sign I am. They are silently pleading with you, “Talk to me!” ~Heather Pryor

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**Ladies Bible Class** – We will be taking the month of December off, resuming our class in January. Please study **Lessons 7 & 8**.

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### **Answers to last month's quiz**

1. Who shut out the distractions of the world in order to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to Him?     Mary
2. Who was forcibly made quiet for nine months for disbelieving the words of an angel?     Zacharias
3. Who found God in a “still, small voice”?     Elijah
4. Who invited some of his friends to a deserted place in order to rest?     Jesus
5. Who was told to meditate on the law of the Lord day and night?  
    Joshua

# RECIPE CORNER

*"She...provides food for her household." ~Prov. 31:15*

Don't throw out those pumpkins you used for fall decorations! You can make a delicious and nutritious soup out of them. Simply cut them in half, scoop out the seeds, lightly salt the interior, and place face down on a greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 for 35 minutes to an hour, or until a knife is easily inserted through the rind and the flesh is very soft. Let it cool, scrape out the pumpkin flesh, mash it, then freeze it or use it to make this wonderful soup!

## PUMPKIN SOUP

- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1 ½ tsp. sea salt
- 4 cups pumpkin puree
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 5 whole black peppercorns
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream

In a large saucepan, heat the chicken broth, salt, pumpkin, onion, thyme, garlic and peppercorns. Bring all to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes. With a stick blender, puree the soup until smooth, or puree it in small batches in a blender. Bring it to a boil again, then reduce heat to low and simmer for another 30 minutes uncovered. Stir in the heavy cream and let it heat through. Garnish with fresh parsley if desired.

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# *Merry Christmas!*