

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

December 2017

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The Wish Gift Book

Do you remember the Sear's Wish Book that would come out every holiday season? When I was a little girl, I would get so excited to see each new edition. I couldn't wait to settle down on the couch for a long perusal. I even pretended one year that Sear's was running a contest and the winner would be allowed to pick a prize from every page of the entire book. I imagined I was the lucky winner and carefully looked at every single page of that book, trying to decide what item I would pick and circling it with a pen after I had reached my decision.

That book was called a wish book for a couple of reasons: The Sear's store reason was that it was full of things you were wishing for that holiday season, and hopefully, your wishes would be granted (by buying items from their store). For me, it was a wish book because it had so many things I wanted to have but would not get; they would remain wishes. (My all-time #1 wish was one of those big, pink, plastic Barbie dream houses with the elevator that went up and down the side...by a string! Remember those?) Although that book was fun when I was little, now I think about how unhappy so many people are today because they are still wishing for so many things they don't have and can't get, and as a result, they are not content.

Contentment is highly sought after but seldom achieved because one tries to obtain it in the wrong ways and with the wrong things. Philippians 4:11 tells us that contentment must be learned. The apostle Paul had been in some difficult situations in his life. He had dealt with hunger, being shipwrecked, imprisoned, and even beaten for the cause of Christ. Yet, he says in this verse that he had learned

to be content in whatever state or circumstance he was in. Contentment doesn't come from external sources; it comes from within. It isn't learned overnight, and it isn't learned easily, but it is obtainable when we learn to shift our focus to the right things and remove it from the things that cause restlessness and discontent in our hearts. The Greek philosopher, Epictetus, said, *“He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.”* It really boils down to focusing on the blessings and gifts from God and being thankful for all that we have in Christ. James 1:17 tells us, *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights...”* The world bombards us from every side with images of what we simply *must* have so we will be happy, and it is all too easy to shift our gaze away from what God has so abundantly blessed us with and look longingly at those other things. If we do that, it will not be long until we are grieving *“for the things which he has not.”*

If we desire to be content, then we should put away our “wish books” and look at the book that shows us what precious gifts God has given us:

- *Also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man. Ecclesiastes 3:13*
- *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23*
- *Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. Luke 6:38*
- *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*

Contentment doesn't come from a wish book, but it is learned by focusing on all of the blessings from God and the teachings of the gift book that God wrote and gave to us. ~Heather Pryor

Ladies Bible Class & Breakfast – Mark your calendars for **January 20th**. We will continue our study of the book of Hebrews. Start the new year by reading that entire book of the Bible, if you haven't already.

Search the Scriptures

“Contentment”

Match the reference to the correct verse.

Hebrews 13:5 Psalm 37:4 Luke 12:15 I Timothy 6:6

1. *“Now godliness with contentment is great gain.”* _____
2. *“Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.”* _____
3. *“Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”* _____
4. *“And He said to them, 'Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses.’”* _____

Answers to last month's quiz

“The Hand of God”

1. Psalm 145:16 – What does God open up His hand and do?
He satisfies the desire of every living thing.
2. Psalm 138:7 – What will the right hand of God do? Save
3. Jeremiah 1:9 – What did God's hand reach out and touch?
Jeremiah's mouth

RECIPE CORNER

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

CHRISTMAS JAM

- 3 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 medium orange – peeled, quartered and seeded (or 2 cans mandarin oranges, drained)
- 1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen strawberries, slightly thawed
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 cups sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1 (1.75 oz.) packet of dry fruit pectin

In a food processor, combine the cranberries and oranges. Process until coarsely chopped. Add the strawberries, cloves and cinnamon and process until the mixture is finely chopped. In a heavy saucepan, combine fruit mixture, water and pectin. Bring to a boil stirring occasionally. Add sugar, stirring until dissolved. Return to a rolling boil. Boil hard one minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and skim off any foam with a spoon. Ladle jam into hot, clean, and sterilized canning jars with a wide mouth funnel placed in the top of the jar. Leave a ¼ inch headspace. Place lids on tightly and process in a water bath for 12-15 minutes. *If you don't wish to can the jam, store the jars in the refrigerator, and use within two weeks.

Merry Christmas

